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THE 'LIVELY PEGGY.'

BY STANLEY J. WEYMAN.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE Keppel Head formed one of the corners at the foot of the street, with the sea before it and the cliff overhanging its rear. From the wall of the Rectory garden, high above it, a child could toss a biscuit on the roof. Its windows looked upon the cobbled quay, made home-like to Beremouth eyes by the raffle of nets and pots that, except at spring-tides or in stormy weather, cumbered the slippery stones. Of winter nights the Keppel's red-curtained windows, wide and low, promised a warm welcome, and as far as sound ale and wholesome rum went—with a tot of smuggled brandy for skippers—they made their promise good. No doubt men went in sober and came out drunk, but the same might be said of places of higher standing; and, after all, what were men's heads made for if not to be overcome? Few in those days found fault with this law of nature, provided the liquor was sound and not hocussed: and if the talk at the bar was sometimes stormy, and not rarely brutal, so was the life it reflected. Both smacked of the sea, its savour and breeziness, its sudden shifts from calm to tempest, its callous indifference.

But this Sunday evening at the Keppel Head was an evening in a thousand. Beremouth was brazenly *en fête*. The house hummed from threshold to attic. Four-fifths of the crew of the lucky brig were there, in various stages of enjoyment, and the greater part well advanced on their road. Laughter and raucous voices poured in gusts from the windows, and, for once, the door between the privileged snug and the kitchen stood open that the humblest might pay his court to Captain Ozias, or at the worst catch a glimpse of the hero in his glory.

For, at any rate, for Copestake it was a night of nights. He loomed, red-faced and expansive, through the misty aureole of

smoke and spirits that surrounded him. Yet was he consistent. Even at the stage he had reached—and the value of the *Belle Dame* had trebled itself since he entered the house—he remained true to himself and enjoyed his triumph after his own fashion. Three times he had told his story, but new hearers, steaming rummers in their hands, still clamoured for the tale, and Copestake was nothing loth to repeat his *Mea Culpa*.

‘To be sure, on the weather quarter we was,’ he said for the fourth time, ‘with the helm hard-up, and kep’ her so till the after-guns come to bearing, and then no more but let her have it as we passed her stern-post. Then boxed about, lads, and under her stern again, raking her fore and aft, and they not able to fire more than the long swivel! Oh, ’twas rare! Three times we raked her, but the last tack they sheered and come up abeam of us, and shots came aboard from such guns as they had, and terrible ’twas for Christian men! So, “Barney Toll,” says I, pitying the poor souls as was being sent to their account unprepared, “it’s sinful work,” says I, “and the burden more than I can bear. Carry on, if so it must be, and if a mast goes, run under her quarter while they are in the raffle and give her the full of it!”’ Ozias paused, shook his head and groaned, his hearers hanging breathless on his words, though three-fourths of them had heard the story and knew precisely what was coming. ‘The full of it!’ he repeated, sighing. He shook his head dolefully. ‘And the words no more than out o’ my sinful mouth, than a ball passed by my head—crouching at the break of the poop I was—and lodged in the mizen, and there was I, Cap’n Copestake, within one foot of everlasting damnation, and naught but covenanted mercy ’tween me and it. It was terrible, I tell ’ee, lads. I didn’t ask no second sign, but down I tumbled quick as you please, in a sweat to think o’ what I had escaped, and hid myself ’twixt two tubs in the after-hold till the trouble be over-past. And every minute, thinks I, as I lay there all of a shake, there’s poor ignorant seamen as never gives a thought to their immortal souls being swept to perdition, cursing and swearing, and all by the act of me, Cap’n Ozias Copestake, as knows better and should ha’ taught them, instead o’ bringing their poor bodies into danger. ’Twas a terrible thought, I tell ’ee,’ he repeated solemnly, his gaze glued to the floor at his feet, while a sympathetic thrill ran through the magnetised circle. “But never again! Never again, Ozias,” says I. “Your sinful body will never lead you into this trouble again!”’

He was silent so long that an outsider, a stranger who had

listened with feelings that may be imagined, could bear it no longer. 'But I hear you gave her a broadside at the last, Cap'n,' he said.

'Like enough, like enough they did!' the Captain answered, sunk in gloom. 'Like enough Barney Toll did, the Lord forgive him. He's a hardened sinner is Barney and knows no better. He's one as I'd ought to be afraid to go to sea with in an Indiaman, let alone that shell of a brig! And to hear the men cursing at the guns, and no more thought o' their souls than so many Bristol niggers, 'twas too much for me! Let alone that sign that come to me and said, as plain as plain, "Go below, Ozias, and get between the tubs, and leave it to them as thinks nothing o' their latter end to carry on!" It was humble and thankful I was to do it.'

'Well, I'm hanged!' the outsider muttered. He looked about him with goggling eyes. If anything could have astounded him more than the tale, it was the breathless admiration that the men about him paid to it. 'Well, I am hanged!' he repeated in a mazed voice.

But he was a landsman who had dropped in by chance, and he knew nothing of Ozias and his ways. He did not know that if Ozias was to be believed, he had taken refuge between the tubs—if the tubs had not figured in each repetition his hearers would have been sorely disappointed—in the heat of every action in which he had taken part. He did not know that than Ozias, croak as he might ashore, there was no more desperate fighter afloat; and that three parts in four of the charm which the company found in his narration lay in a mystifying uncertainty how far it was real to Ozias himself. Hence the bated breath, the rapt attention, the awed faces that even the foreseen reappearance of the tubs failed to provoke to a smile.

Some held the story to be pure delusion. Others believed it to be an invention, framed in the first place to afford spiritual comfort to Ozias's conscience, and persisted in so long that Ozias himself now believed in it. But the majority regarded it as a mystery, a parting of body and spirit, as it were, that shed about Copestake an awful light. They discussed it in corners, in low voices, thinking slowly and speaking seldom. They remarked with admiration that even in his cups Ozias never departed from it, nor did the boldest venture to contradict it in his presence—not even Barney Toll, though Barney was the roughest of mates.

By this time both rooms were full of noise, for by some odd accident an anker of Nantz had sprung a leak and been brought

ashore, and the crew were standing treat to the privileged. The noise of the revel could be heard as far as the Privateersman, where a like scene was staged, and it is possible that a similar anker had met with an accident. Between the two houses men reeled to and fro, brushing aside the half-hearted efforts of the women to lead them home.

Of those who bragged and staggered, among the tipsiest was Joe Fewster. He had had his share of the brandy—was he not Budgen's nephew?—and his head was not of the strongest. He viewed the wealth accruing to his uncle as already his own, and was loud in his denunciation of Budgen's stinginess. 'The old skinflint!' he boasted, addressing whoever would listen to him. 'He'll ha' to do me rich now! He'll ha' to gi' me a share, or sure as I'm alive I'll 'list! I'll skelp him now or I'll cost him more than his whole cargo, so help me, I will!'

His hearers winked. 'And how'll 'ee do it, Joe?' they asked slyly, though Joe's hold on Budgen was no secret.

'You'll see!' Joe replied, with drunken gravity. 'And he'll see too, th' old curmudgeon! I ha' got him in the hollow of this hand! There's a good time coming, and I do invite 'ee all to drink wi' me to-morrow, and day after, and day after that and——'

A man cut him short. 'Lord,' he said, with a wink, 'wi' treating and drinking you'll drink the prize dry—if so be as you are as good as your word! But there, lads, I'm fearing Joe, brave as he be now, when he's facing Budgen to-morrow he'll sing another tune! You'll be hiding between the tubs, Joe, I'm fearing?'

'Ay,' a third put in, struck by a happy thought. 'I fear that be so. But there's a warr out o' that, Joe, lad. Face the old chap while the drink's in 'ee, that's what I say! No time like now—if ye bean't afeared of him?'

'Show him me!' Joe bawled, staggering to his feet, and striking out wildly. 'Show me the old badger! And I'll strip his skin off him! Show him me!'

'Fine words! Fine words, lad, for sure! But the Cove's far and——'

'I'll go there, right now. I'll go there!' Joe shouted. 'Sink me, but I will!' He waggled his silly head, and reeled towards the door, fell against the table, brought up short and cursed it. 'Wha' you getting in my way for?' he maundered.

The jokers saw their chance. They egged him on, grinning at one another. One smacked him on the back, another pushed him

towards the door. With shouts of laughter they handed him across the wharf, calling to others and passing on the jest. The notion of rousing old Budgen from his bed tickled them hugely, and with drunken jokes they hauled in a boat, and at no small risk of a ducking Joe, still hiccoughing threats of what he would do, was bundled into it. The cool air did anything but sober him, and he would have set off without oars. But someone fetched them and set them on the thole-pins, and amid a volley of 'Off you go, Joe! Bully for you, Joe! Bolt the badger, Joe!' they gave the boat a powerful thrust and sent it out.

One, more sober than his fellows, opined that the man might be drowned. But 'Not he!' the others scoffed. 'He's a fool, but he's a waterman! And the wind's off shore. 'Twill be quiet under the point. He'll not drown!'

Joe so far justified their opinion that, becoming aware that he was holding oars, he began to pull away more steadily than might have been expected. He rowed, indeed, after a fashion that promised to make his voyage a long one, and the oars rattled on the thole-pins in no seaman-like manner. And once or twice he fell over the thwart. But he recovered himself, gave way again, and the ebb that was running carried him out. The men listened awhile to the sound of the oars, then reeled back to their drink and speedily forgot him.

Fortunately for him, Joe knew every rock and yard of creaming water that fringed the beach, and drunk or sober, had the long-shoreman's instinct. But by the time he found himself abreast of the point towards which he had been headed, his notion of his destination and his errand had grown hazy. When he opened the Cove—or would have opened it had he been able to see—the off-shore wind that blew out of the Cove and put a chop on the water, helped the ebb-tide to carry him seawards. For some minutes he did not notice this, or that he was drifting at a fair rate towards the coast of France. Then his obfuscated senses grew clearer. He became aware of what he was doing. He paused, swore tipsily, looked about him and wondered in his muddled way what had brought him there. Presently feeling the breeze on his left hand, he pulled the bow of the boat round and set it for the land again. He had the wit to do this, but his progress was now slow. Both wind and tide were against him, and he was in no condition to make a steady effort. He made little way.

The moon had not risen, and a landsman in his plight, with

nothing about him but the dark sea, rippling invisibly against the bow, and breaking here and there into pale gleams, would have, likely enough, been panic-stricken. But Joe was not a landsman. Puzzled and vexed, he persisted, and made some way. The notion of visiting Budgen had passed from his mind, and why he was afloat he could not say; but when, pausing to take breath and to look over his shoulder he saw a dark mass before him, he had the sense to know that it was the French prize, and he supposed that it was the object he had set out to reach. He pulled on, drove his boat under the quarter, got hold of the chains, and swaying perilously on his feet, pulled himself along until he found the ladder.

He climbed aboard without mishap, but was still so fuddled that he let his boat go adrift, and when he reached the deck he did not think it strange that a man should clutch him by the throat. Probably he took the act for a friendly move, to save him from falling; for as the man relaxed his grasp, Joe laughed foolishly. 'Stacks o' brandy!' he hiccupped. 'Fair stacks o' brandy!' He added something about 'Ozias's navy! Much right as any-one,' and he reeled aft, a little more drunk now that his anxiety was relieved. He had been aboard in the afternoon, he knew his way, and he staggered aft and tumbled down to the skipper's cabin. No light there—nor above, for that matter! But all he now wanted was to sleep, and he felt for the bunk. He did not find it, but all was one to him, and he slipped to the floor, his back against a bulk-head. Almost before he had touched the wood he was asleep and snoring; nor did he know any more than the planks under him that he had been within as little of his death as was hardly worth naming. For once the drink had saved a man's life.

Unluckily for him, he was one of those who never become seasoned vessels, but pay for every bout the penalty of an aching head and a queasy stomach. How long he slept he did not know, but he awoke to a dreadful sense of nausea and giddiness. The grey light of dawn, stealing in through the round port-hole, disclosed the squalor of a cabin hastily abandoned. Overalls that had slid into corners lay mixed up with sea-boots and empty bottles, frowsy blankets hung from dingy bunks, and the smell of spirits poisoned the air. The brig floated on an even keel, but Joe's brain reeled, and the floor heaved with it. With a groan he closed his eyes and sought relief in sleep.

But something, he did not know what, kept unconsciousness at bay; something that in comparison with his splitting head and

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sickening qualms was a slight, yet a growing discomfort. To escape it, and to relieve his aching hips, he rose on his elbow and with an exclamation of disgust he turned over. He found no relief; on the contrary, he awoke, shivering, to the fact that he was wet and chilled to the bone. The close air, reeking with an odour noisome to him at the moment, turned his stomach, and he sat up, and leant his head on his hand. He looked dizzily about him.

A second later he staggered to his feet, staring with incredulous eyes at the floor of the cabin. Things were afloat, nay, it was all afloat; and through the shallow flood that covered the boards rose here and there a stream of bubbles.

For the space of half a minute, Joe, propping himself against a bunk, eyed the phenomenon stupidly. His first notion was that the horrors, of which he had had one experience, had taken on a new shape. But even while he glowered at the water it seemed to rise, and the truth broke on his bemused senses. With a hoarse cry he splashed to the door, dragged it open with difficulty, and and in a panic he scrambled up the companion. He gained the deck, he looked wildly round him in search of the watch. He saw no watch. There was no living creature on deck. But he saw enough and too much. He saw that, motionless as the brig lay, the sea was chopping briskly about her under a rising breeze, and he sprang to the port quarter and looked over.

One glance confirmed his fears. A second look he gave to the *Lively Peggy*, swaying gently at her moorings, the length of two cables away. Then he raised his voice and yelled, his headache and his qualms alike forgotten. He staggered, still shouting, to the starboard gunwale—no, there was no boat there either. Hurling shrill cries through the grey morning stillness, he ran to the fo'c'sle, and dropped into it. Here there was but a splash of water on the planks, but he had seen too much to be deceived. He tore the nearest sleeper from his bunk. 'Turn out!' he screamed. 'Turn out, you swabs!' He seized another by the hair, and shook him. 'Turn out! Turn out! The brig's sinking! The brig's sinking, you drunken pigs!'

'What the blazes——'

'I tell you the brig's sinking!' Joe repeated, desperately shoving the resisting seaman to the ladder. 'There's no boat, and I can't swim. She's down a'most to the chains now!'

The man swore at him, struck at him, thought him mad. But Joe persisted. He dragged out another; he pushed them, angry and

furious as they were, on deck. There a single glance over the side was enough, and three panic-stricken voices bawled across the grey waters. 'Ahoy, there! Ahoy, the *Peggy*! Help! We are sinking, you lubbers!' they screamed.

Three other men staggered up, sleep in their eyes. For them, too, a glance was enough. The brig was low in the water and sinking. The sounding-rod, hastily dropped, showed so many feet of bilge that pumping, if they had had the strength, was useless. Still, 'Haul out those Frenchies!' one cried. 'Set them to the pumps and——'

'Set them to your grandmother!' Joe retorted bitterly. 'They've gone and taken the boats—they're half-way across with this wind, damn them! And scuttled her, you thundering swabs, while you snored!'

'Ay, and broached the top tier o' casks!' a seaman muttered, sniffing the brandy that scented the morning air. The main body of the French crew had been removed, but those left, having escaped from the part of the hold in which they had been confined, had made a job of it.

Cursing furiously, the men raised their voices together. But to no effect. Not a head showed above the bulwarks of the *Peggy*, and it was plain that there, too, the handful left on board had made free with the liquor. No help was to be expected from them. Desperate, two of the men bunged an empty cask and reeved a line about it, while others sought for loose gratings and began hurriedly to lash them together—but without ceasing to shout. Oaths of anger at their own folly flew like hail, for all saw that, though they might save themselves, the prize was doomed and there would be a heavy reckoning to pay. But first to save themselves, for, sailor-like, not a man could swim, and the pale misty water, heaving sullenly about them, was creeping up the brig's side.

Still the sleeping *Peggy* remained blind, deaf, and mute. She gave no sign; even her boats lay to landward of her and out of sight. The men strained their eyes, searching the Cove and the slope of the bluff. But the slumbering cottages that sprinkled the Cove might have been a hundred miles away for all the hope they gave. Budgen's lay hidden from them by the hull of the *Peggy*.

Yet it was from one of the cottages that help came. The men's voices had grown hoarse with hailing, when one of them, looking shorewards, saw a man moving on the path that led to the Cove. As he descended towards the beach, he gazed towards the

Belle Dame, and he seemed to be wondering if the alarm was a drunken freak. Then—and pretty quickly—he appeared to grasp their plight, and to the watchers' joy he started into activity. He ran across the shingle and pushed down a dingy. He hurried to the loft for sculls, and shoved off, using one over the stern.

For a space he was lost behind the bulk of the *Peggy*, and the men trembled lest he should board the privateer. If he did he might be too late, for with every moment the French brig wallowed more deeply. But apparently the man had grasped the need for haste, for two minutes later he came into sight rounding the stern of the *Peggy* and plashing over the ripples. He wore no more than a shirt and breeches, and 'It's young Bligh,' one exclaimed.

'Ay, 'tis the Lieutenant!' a second agreed, and in haste to shift the blame they cursed the watch on the *Peggy* for drunken swine.

Bligh pulled his boat round to come under the quarter. 'Is it too late to do anything?' he shouted.

'Ay, sir! We are but five.'

'Scuttled?' He held his boat a few yards from the chains.

'To be sure,' they cried, shamefaced. They tried to carry it off by cursing the Frenchies.

'Are her money and papers on board?'

'The skipper took the money!'

He measured her depth with his eyes. 'Then get her log!' he ordered. 'He's not taken that, I'll be bound.' And as they hesitated, 'Jump, men!' he added, 'or, by the Lord, I don't take you off!'

They measured the risk, each loth to go below. But the habit of authority carried it: two of the men hurried to the cabin, the others turned and snatched up such possessions as they chose. Two minutes later Bligh took aboard, sinking his craft to the gunwale, five of the meekest sailormen that ever used the sea—and Joe. Nor was it too soon. The brig was sinking sluggishly, keeping an even keel and as little moved by the small sea that was running as if she had stood on the stocks. She was as good as lost and gone, the prize so hardly won, with her rich store of brandy and all that it meant of profit and pay and prize-money.

Bligh looked darkly at the men, but said not a word until they had rowed him to the *Peggy*. Then 'Get aboard and rouse them out!' he said sternly. 'You'd all get six dozen if you sailed with me. If you value your skins, I'd advise you to get out of sight before this is known!'

The men, ashamed to retort, hastened to obey. Joe alone kept his seat, and with him for a crew Bligh went on towards the beach. 'How did you come aboard?' he asked, eyeing Joe with distaste.

Joe told him. 'They'd all ha' been drowned but for me,' he said proudly. He, at any rate, was not responsible.

'And no loss!' the Lieutenant retorted. He was thinking for how small a fault he had suffered—in comparison with these! Yet a horror seized him, as with the pure air of the morning cooling his brow he reflected on the likeness between his case and theirs. He thought of Peggy, from whose side he had risen to look at the weather as seamen will, and looking had caught the faint sound of a distant hail. He thought of Peggy, her fair young face cradled on her white arm, and he swore once more to keep the vow that he had taken.

Should he go up and tell Budgen? No, Budgen would hear the news soon enough. Let him sleep while he might! Then he thought of the Rector and his concern in the prize, and it must be admitted that he laughed. Next to Budgen's the Rector's loss would be the gravest.

He kept a backward eye on the brig, and as the boat touched the beach he uttered an exclamation. Joe, whose face was set that way, joined in it. Slowly, smoothly, with just one gentle swirl, the *Belle Dame* quivered, bowed, and sank. The flags at the peak hovered a few seconds above the surface, then they too sank beneath it, and were gone. Where she had floated the sea heaved awhile, smooth and grey and misty to the offing, broken only by the *Peggy's* hull and her bare poles.

The Lieutenant groaned. He was a seaman, and no seaman could view that sight unmoved.

CHAPTER XIV.

News of the catastrophe, favoured by Joe, was not long, we may be sure, in reaching the town. It sped abroad, indeed, like wild-fire in stubble. Within twenty minutes the alarm was travelling down the main street of Beremouth. Early risers threw up windows, sluggards, aroused from their sweetest sleep, stared blankly at one another, hasty feet sounded on the cobbles. Within an hour the

Cove and the headland were black with gazers. All Beremouth seemed to have deserted their pillows to stand and gape at the sea that heaved cold and vacant about the bereft privateer. Prize and fortune had sunk as if by magic, and with sorrow anger was largely mingled. That so much brandy should be wasted was an affliction that came home to many; they eyed the thankless waves that had swallowed it and could have wept! But bad as this was, it was no measure of the misfortune. That which lay beneath the waves, and, alas, lay so far below them that salvage was impossible, was now gold, doubly gilt. Men reckoned up the stout ship and the prize cargo, doubled the profit and the prize-money, and multiplied four-fold the wealth it would have brought to the little port. The tradesmen saw their visions of full tills and slates cleared of debts turn to thin air, and, 'Pity! pity!' quoth one laconically, and flattered himself that he had summed up in a phrase the lamentations of more wordy men.

But, a Welshman and a foreigner, he did but touch the surface of the wound. It was in its pride that Beremouth suffered most sorely. It saw itself held up for a laughing-stock, and knew that never, never would the little town hear the end of that fat prize! Saltash would chuckle in its high places, Yealmpton would laugh aloud, Fowey and Falmouth hold their sides as they told the rich story of Beremouth and its Letter of Marque. Wherever they went the tale of Gotham and the men who planted a hedge about the nightingale would be told of them! Loud and deep were the curses spent on the French, on the drunken crew, on Ozias and Budgen. The heroes of yesterday were become the scapegoats of to-day, and no man spared them or pitied them.

Had the watch that had slept on duty shown themselves, they would have been roughly handled. But they had taken Bligh's advice, slipped ashore, and hidden themselves, in fear, it was said, not so much of Budgen as of Ozias. Of Ozias strange tales were told. It was rumoured that, roused with difficulty and confronted with the fact, he had called for a stupendous measure of brandy, swallowed it at a draught, and sunk into the happy insensibility from which he had been dragged. Of Budgen darker stories were told, and though all that was said of him did not pass for gospel, it was agreed that he had been seized with the rope round his neck, and that he now lay in a darkened room held down by four strong seamen. The more morbid gazed hungrily at the windows of his house, while others wondered with gusto what the Rector would

say to it, and added that they would not for a fortune be in Budgen's shoes when they met.

Of all concerned, young Bligh, it was allowed, alone came out well. He had saved the watch—though that, perhaps, was a pity. And it was whispered that he had warned Budgen of the danger of leaving the Frenchmen on board. And but for the antipathy which the longshoreman of that day felt for the Service—an antipathy that the work of the press-gang continually fed—he would have been a hero. As it was, when the crowd began to leave the Cove and stream back over the headland, more than one group raised a cheer as they passed the Blighs' cottage; and if the Lieutenant had not laughingly held Peggy back, a fair face blushing with pride would have beamed its thanks from the window. There, at any rate, was a happy heart that day.

In the upshot the part that Bligh had played did not go without its reward. Budgen took an odd and certainly an unexpected line. Of the sufferers by the disaster he was the greatest. He had seen himself for a few intoxicating hours freed from embarrassment and raised above care. He awoke to find himself the poorer by his share of the cost of the cruise, his debt increased, and his creditor justly incensed with his management. The effect on a morose man might have been foreseen, yet it took people by surprise. He turned ugly, as his neighbours said. He took refuge in a sullen determination to do nothing. He set himself to spite the Rector at all costs. He would not borrow more, he would not refit the *Peggy*, he would hear of no more cruises, he would only sit and sulk at home, his door closed to all, and the black dog on his back. He would do nothing—with one exception.

He took back Charles Bligh. Informed by this time why the Rector had been anxious to get rid of the young man, whose presence in the place was a continual reminder of his daughter's disgrace, Budgen re-engaged him in open defiance of his patron, and hugged himself on it. He knew himself to be in the Rector's power. Well, the Rector, d——n him, should not have it all his own way. He, too, should suffer.

When Dr. Portnal heard this and that Bligh was again at work at the Cove, his vexation and wrath were hot enough to satisfy even Budgen. He sent for the boat-builder, and scolded, threatened, argued; but to no purpose. He might as well have argued with a stone wall. Budgen, glum and soured, allowed that his affairs were desperate. He did not deny that his only hope lay

in another cruise—and the Rector was willing to make, and offered to make, a last advance for the purpose. But he was not to be moved. He would not hear reason. He would not lay his last stake on the table. He took a gloomy pleasure in repeating this and in thwarting the other. He'd run no more risk o' blame, he said. 'And Ozias won't go afloat again, that's sure,' he added.

'He is not the only seaman in the world,' the Rector answered angrily.

'Well, he be the only one for me, and the only one I trust.'

'Then,' the Rector retorted, his wrongs rising before him, 'you trust a man whose negligence has cost you dearly—and me!'

'Then I don't trust nobody, and that's about it.'

'But—but why employ the other man? He's only an added cost to you—an expense, Budgen,' the Rector continued sternly, 'that you cannot afford.'

'Cause I can't do my books without him!' Budgen rejoined. 'Nor I won't.' And that was his last word. Though Dr. Portnal, bringing all the terror of his brow into play, said more to the same effect, Budgen was not to be moved. He only repeated sullenly what he had said a dozen times before.

So, while the excitement died away, and days stretched into weeks, the *Lively Peggy* lay stripped and idle at her moorings, and of Sunday evenings the Beremouth lads and lasses gathered along the churchyard wall, and gazing down at her, cracked nuts and ate gingerbread. To Budgen, who could not look through the diamond panes of his fuchsia-clad home without seeing her, swaying with the tide, she became almost as great an eye-sore as to the Rector had become the son-in-law, who every day was visible going to and from his humble work.

For, rage as he might, the Rector could move neither the one nor the other. And he suffered. It was not only that he felt the man's presence and that of the daughter who had so lowered herself, to be a disgrace to him, but he found in their neighbourhood a perpetual reminder of the fall that his pride and his belief in himself had sustained. Yet he had to put up with the man's presence; he could not avoid him. There was no corner he turned that might not disclose him, no moment that he could hold himself free from the fear of his appearance. Take what care he might, they must meet. When this happened—and it happened about once a week—the two passed without speaking. The young

man looked before him, a smile of amusement twinkling in his eyes. The elder tried to frown down his enemy, and to crush him under the weight of his displeasure, but failing to meet the other's gaze, he was forced to pass on with a sense of defeat that recalled their encounter at the cottage and stung him almost to madness. In a long career of mastery it was his first check, and it was very bitter to him.

He laid it at his daughter's door, and, sad to say, he came near to hating her. She had never been a Portnal, he told himself; her notions had never been his! She had been false to her caste as well as to her duty. Yet for very shame he could not treat her as he treated the man. He could not ignore her if chance threw her in his way, and aware of this he considered long and carefully how he would deal with her, and he prepared himself. It is doubtful if Peggy did, but it would have availed her little if she had. When the meeting, on her side equally dreaded and desired, came about—when returning one day from the town with her poor shopping she saw her father, portly and formidable, descending the road towards her, and she knew that, prepared or not, she could not escape, the girl's heart failed her. Her knees shook under her, the beating of her heart stifled her; she had to force herself to go on. But though, as they met, speech deserted her and she could only, clutching her parcel to her breast, meet his grim silence with piteous looks, she did find words at last.

'Father, forgive me!' she cried—and what more could she have said, had she prepared herself? 'Oh, sir—forgive us, I beseech you!' And if they had not been in the public eye she would have fallen on her knees before him.

But he was not melted. He looked at her with smouldering eyes as if he would learn whether poverty and hardship had altered her. 'It is useless,' he said. 'You have disgraced yourself, and me, and your sister. Forgiveness cannot wipe out the stain. You have taken your own road. You have chosen to sink yourself, and on the level you have sought you must live. We cannot raise you.'

'Yet, say, sir,' she prayed desperately, 'say that you forgive me.'

'And by condoning your disobedience, encourage the sin in others? No! No,' he repeated, raising his voice, and in his anger he had no mercy on her. 'My duty does not lie that way. The forgiveness that you seek will not help you, for it is not with me your punishment lies. The tie that you have formed in folly will be your punishment, and I cannot remit it. He who tempted you

to dishonour your father will not, be sure, girl, long honour you. He who taught you to deceive will think it no sin to deceive you. You have given way to passion, you have set desire above duty, and he for whom you have been weak enough to do this, will be the first, girl, to despise you.'

'You say dreadful things!' she gasped. She was white to the lips.

'True things,' he replied bitterly. 'And the time will come when you will know them to be true. I do not judge you. It is he who will judge you, who is judging you even now—and judging himself. Seeing day by day, girl, the burden he has laid upon his poverty, the encumbrance that, sinking under his own failings he has taken on his shoulders.'

'It is not true!' she protested in agony—oh, he was cruel, cruel!—'You do not know him!'

He was not softened. 'It is you who do not know him,' he rejoined. 'But you will know him. And the fruit of disobedience that you have eaten will be as ashes in your mouth. Let my words warn you, for they will not fall to the ground.'

He left her weeping bitterly. He stalked on down the road. The meeting had to be, and he was glad that it was over, and that it had taken place out of earshot of others. For one moment, indeed, recalling her stricken face, the father came near to repenting of the things he had said. Tenderness stirred in him, and memory. But he trod down the feeling; he recalled his wrongs, her conduct, her deceit! And the moment passed.

Yet, had he looked back, he might even then have repented. He might have gone back to her and many things might have been changed. For he would have seen that the girl, after tottering a few yards, had broken down altogether. Blindly seeking the side of the road, and leaning against the rough stones of the wall, she had burst into passionate weeping.

For his words had wounded her in a sore spot, they had fallen on a heart tender and open to fear. Her husband was still her lover, ardent, kind, unwearied in service, quick to shield her from every hardship that he could avert. She could find no fault in him. He was all, she told herself, that her fondest fancy had promised. But she was not blind. Love sharpened her eyes, and she saw that there were hours when she did not exist for him, when he lost himself in thought, when his face was clouded and his mind travelled far. She watched him—was it not natural?—and she

knew, no one so well, when care rode him, and the hasty or impatient word would escape before he was aware. Such moments she had hitherto set down to anxiety on her account, to his reluctance to expose her to inevitable things, to humiliation, to poverty, to care. And she had put the thought of them from her, confident in his love, and prepared to suffer worse, ay, far worse things, by his side.

But her conscience was not clear, and to-day, with her father's stern prophecies ringing, like a Jeremiad, in her ears, she trembled. Was it possible that Charles repented? That, thinking only of herself, she had not measured the care, the cost, the burden which she had cast on him? The shadow on his brow, the moments of depression that she knew so well, the moody word—was it possible that there was another cause for these than that which she had imagined? Did he in his darker hours question the wisdom of the step that he had taken?

She knew that he still loved her; she was certain of that, and certain that in his happier moods she was still the sweetheart of his dreams, and the wife of his choice. But her heart was riven by the doubt, and worse, by the fear how long this would last. How long in poverty and trial would his heart be true to her? And if he did not repent now, if he repented by and by? What then?

After a time she ceased to weep, and alarmed lest she should be observed she composed herself. She took up her parcel and went on, and youth and hope began to comfort her. She told herself that if she were loving and patient—and she believed that there could be no end to her patience—she must still hold his heart.

But her own heart was full and all her womanly emotions were in play when she reached the cottage. She blessed the threshold that was home, she embraced with joy the hardships for which it stood. She raised the latch softly, and she saw that Charles was there and alone. He was at the table, poring over a map, and the sight was too much for her.

She flung herself on her knees beside him, she cast her arms about him, and the tears rained down her face. 'Oh, Charles, be good to me!' she sobbed. 'Be good to me! Promise, promise, you will love me always! Always, always, whatever happens! For I have only you! I have only you, now!'

The cry came from her wounded heart, and in the first moments of surprise the man, amazed by her emotion, did not understand. Still he set himself to soothe her, stirred himself and, deeply

stirred, by her appeal. 'My girl, my girl, what is it?' he asked, holding her to him. 'Look up and tell me! What is it? What has upset you?'

'I have seen my father!' she sobbed.

'Ah!' he said, 'I see!' He no longer wondered at her agitation. 'And he has frightened you?'

So much known, she could not keep her fears from him, though even in this moment of emotion her woman's wit told her that it might be wiser to be silent. 'He—he said that you would tire of me,' she sobbed. 'He said—oh, Charles, he said I was a burden to you! That I had cost you too much, and—and you would see it by and by! That you would be sorry you had bur—burdened yourself with me!'

He laughed, taking it lightly. 'What a piteous tale!' he said. 'And a piteous girl! He said that, did he? Well, I am not surprised, dear. It is what he would say. But your father does not know me, and you do, Peggy. You do, Peggy, don't you? And trust me?'

'Yes, yes,' she assured him. 'But sometimes you are—you are grave, and I don't know what to think.' Yet already she was comforted.

'You think I may be repenting?' he said, smiling. He tightened his arm about her. 'Foolish, foolish girl! Silly child! Why, your heart is leaping out of you! And all—do you know why?' He broke off, leaving the question unanswered, and when he resumed his tone was grave, and his manner altered. 'Do you know why, Peggy—why you are frightened? Why you let so little a thing upset you? Because, though you love me, you do not see me as I am. And you must learn to know me, and still to trust me; to bear with my sadness when I am sad and my impatience when I am peevish. To know me not perfect, to forgive me when the past lies heavy on me, dear, and failure and disappointment. But you must never, never doubt that I love you, Peggy. If I could wipe out the past and its consequences, if I could make myself other than I am—'

'I would not change you!' she vowed.

'No, I believe you. And you must believe me. You must believe that you are the one bright spot, the joy of a life that, but for you, dear, would be all shadow. Have you not redeemed me?' His voice was deep with feeling. 'Redeemed me at your own cost, and dearly! Ay, dearly!'

‘No! No!’ she panted, stopping his mouth. ‘You shall not say it!’

‘But it is so. And redeemed also, I hope and pray, one who after you is dearest to me. And that being so, can you doubt that I love you—were there nothing else? That in my darkest hours it is you who lighten the poverty, the failure, the disgrace that you have stooped to share.’

She covered him with kisses, and did believe, and she was comforted. And half an hour later he heard her carolling merrily, as she went about her household tasks in the rooms above, now shaking a duster, now showing her bright face at the casements that looked on the shining sea. Not that her tasks were heavy, for the men’s care left her little to do.

For the time she was reassured. She put the ominous warning from her, she vowed that she would not remember it, that she would never in his darkest moods give thought to it again.

Yet the seed had been sown, the thought had been dropped into her mind. She was not less patient with him—and there were times when patience was needed. Rather, she was more patient. But she was watchful, and she was anxious. She laboured to cheer him and to show a gay face, and love taught her the way; and presently she became aware that she had a fellow-worker whose anxiety fell little short of hers and whose forethought, daily and hourly exercised for her, won first her gratitude and then her affection. Her eyes, open to things below the surface, pierced the meek exterior of the old Captain, and discovered how much of the peace and contentment of the home was due to one who seemed but a cipher in it. A common love taught her to know and to lean upon him. Beremouth might think him a burden and a drawback to her. Her friends might look askance upon him as a shabby, useless, cringing old man, whom necessity and his small pay and smaller pension alone rendered bearable. But Peggy knew better.

CHAPTER XV.

WITH men physical daring is more common than moral courage. The very shame that compels a man to face danger is akin to the diffidence that forbids him to outrage his fellows. The maxim may not apply to women to the same extent, but it does apply, and it was pretty quickly apparent in the Beremouth neighbourhood that

in her loyalty to her friend Charlotte Bicester stood alone. She found none to follow her, and few to praise her. The world took its cue from the Rector, shook its head over his girl's delinquency, pronounced her outside the pale, and preached to its daughters on the sin of disobedience. A line must be drawn, they said. For the man, cashiered, disreputable, and of low habits, he was clearly impossible; and the girl, wilful and ill-guided, having chosen to cast in her lot with him, must abide by it. She could not be a nice girl, and to countenance her would be to place a premium on misconduct. One could not be too careful.

No doubt there were girls of Peggy's own age who would have visited her were it only out of a romantic desire to see with their own eyes the shifts that love in a cottage entailed. But their elders, more cautious if as curious, set their veto on the notion. The result was that the young wife who had been all her life a leader among her peers, a gay buoyant spirit, more highly valued abroad than at home, found herself as suddenly and as completely deserted as if she had been thrown on an uninhabited island. If she alighted on a dear friend in the street, the dear friend met her with a forced smile, uttered a few constrained and banal phrases, and, feeling the eye of a disapproving county upon her, broke away as quickly as was decent. Only Charlotte came to the cottage, and only Charlotte knew the price in the shape of scoldings and black looks that each visit cost her.

'You!' her mother would say, fanning herself furiously, 'who have your own position to make! And ought to be particular, as I have told you, miss, times and times again! I declare I am that ashamed of you I can hardly look people in the face! If you were Lady Chudleigh, or the Honourable Eleanor, you might take a liberty! Being what you are, I've no patience with you, lowering yourself as never was! And when her own sister don't visit her!'

'More shame to her!' was Charlotte's undutiful answer. 'And I mean to tell her so some day!'

'I hope you will do nothing of the kind! It is no business of yours, and Sir Alberty, that the minx treated so shameful, our very next neighbour! I should like to know what he says to it. Silly, foolish girl, when there's many a man been caught by a plain face that a pretty one's jilted.'

Charlotte reddened. 'He ought to go and see her himself,' she said.

'He! Him go to see her! Well, Charlotte, you are a simpleton!'

'Well, he will—before another month's out. You see if he doesn't, ma'am!'

'I'll believe it when I see it!' was Lady Bicester's conclusion. 'Silly romantic girl, do you think because you've no proper pride he hasn't?' And again, with irritation: 'I should like to know what he thinks of your goings on, miss! You ought to be well shook!'

Charlotte made a face. And a Sunday or two later—but that was well on in the autumn—she kept her word, as far as Augusta was concerned. The two girls met after service and walked towards the Rectory together. As they paused before the arch that led into the garden Charlotte delivered her mind with her usual abruptness. 'Augusta,' she said, 'why don't you go and see Peggy? Surely it is time you did.'

Augusta smiled. 'You think so?' she said. Her superior tone never failed to irritate the other.

'Of course I do! Or I should not say so.'

'Well, I think otherwise, my dear. My duty to my father comes first.'

'It's your duty to make it up.'

'But not,' Augusta replied shrewdly, 'to fail to make it up and so make matters worse.'

'But the thing is done. Why don't you make the best of it?'

'Done! It is done, unfortunately. Done so ill that it may not be possible to make any best of it,' Augusta retorted. She was armed at all points. She had thought the matter out, and was not to be ruffled.

'Well, I think you are very hard,' Charlotte urged. 'Your own sister, and your only sister!'

'And a naughty sister, and a rash sister, my dear! And what is more to the point, a very ungrateful and a very undutiful daughter, Charlotte.'

'But you've heard of the prodigal son, haven't you? He was received by his father and——'

'Ah, on that, you must speak to her father!' Augusta replied, feeling that she was having the best of it. 'I am guided by him. And he has to think of more than his daughter!'

Charlotte fired a parting shot. 'Well, I don't think you will ever follow her example, Augusta.'

Augusta's reply—she had an angelic temper—took the form of an invitation to cake and wine—extended after a sweeping glance had apprised the speaker that Wyke had gone home.

Charlotte did not accept, but, silly girl, left in a huff; with the intention, the other sagely suspected, of overtaking Sir Albery. In this she did Charlotte an injustice, but as a matter of fact as the girl drove homeward she did overtake him, and on the impulse of the moment she pulled up. To no one else would the idea of pressing him to call on the girl who had jilted him have seemed anything but absurd. But Charlotte was in a class by herself; she was very angry, and the deed was done before she had weighed it.

'Sir Albery,' she said abruptly, 'why don't you go and see Peggy? There's not a soul goes near her. She might be a leper by the way she is treated.'

He turned as red as a sunburnt complexion permitted him to turn. He stared at the girl, and he was not a little provoked. She read his feelings, and 'There,' she said penitently before he could reply. 'Now I've done it! I suppose I ought not to have spoken. But I couldn't help it, and mother will be mad with me!'

'Wait a minute,' he said. He hesitated. 'Perhaps you will give me a lift?'

She nodded and he climbed up. She drove on, flustered for once, and for Charlotte shy. 'I know I am dreadfully forward,' she said penitently. 'I speak before I think, you know.'

'You haven't thought—that perhaps her husband may not like it?'

'Who—oh, Peggy's husband? I think he has more sense. I like him.' Charlotte never considered whether what she said would please. 'I believe you—I believe you would like him too, Sir Albery, if you knew him better.'

'Is he—is he good to her?' he asked in a low voice.

'Very good,' Charlotte said stoutly. 'And the old man is a darling. And the place is—it's not so bad as you'd think, indeed it isn't. But she is as lonely as an owl. She sees no one from week's end to week's end, and no one goes near her. I think it's a shame!'

'Why does not her sister?'

'She won't! That's Augusta all over!'

He expressed no opinion, and Charlotte felt more than before that she had blundered. That was not a thing that she could keep

to herself, and 'I wish I had not spoken,' she said. 'Mother says I am a fool!'

'A very kind fool,' he replied. 'But I think that you have not considered what you are asking me to do, Miss Bicester. Or how distasteful it may be to—to do it. I could not go there without—without ripping up things that are better left alone, and seeing things that I would rather forget.'

Charlotte yielded. 'Then don't go,' she said. 'Please forget what I said. Of course, I had no right to ask you.'

'The right of a very good friend to her,' he replied. 'You have that right, and I admit it. I am sure you meant well. But I cannot forget the past, nor what I hoped. Nor what I have suffered,' he added in a lower tone.

'But you would not punish her—for that!' the girl pleaded.

'God forbid! And God forbid that I should say that it was her fault. But I suffered,' he went on, driven to confide to this girl what he had never thought to confide to anyone. 'And if I do what you ask, and I go there and see her poor and—and pinched and changed, I must suffer afresh.' Then, looking steadily ahead, 'I loved her, you see,' he said.

Charlotte found a lump in her throat. 'I'm a beast!' she muttered. 'I ought to have more thought!'

'No,' he answered, smiling in spite of his pain. 'It does you honour. But tell me one thing. Is he sober now?'

'As a judge, as far as I know!'

'But you might not know—I suppose?'

'But he drinks water. Indeed he does! They all do!'

Wyke shook his head. 'That looks bad,' he said seriously. 'I don't like that. It's unnatural. Water? Good heavens!'

'Well, it's all I've seen them drink,' Charlotte maintained.

'Dear! dear! That's bad.' Then, as the cob reached the gate of the Grange and would have turned in, 'Thank you,' he said. She pulled up and he got out. 'I will see,' he said awkwardly. 'But I—I shall do nothing in a hurry. Good day.'

His tone was stiff, and Charlotte as she drove on to the house believed that she had offended him, and she was sorry. 'But I don't care!' she said recklessly. Yet she looked as if she did care, and for once she did not confess her indiscretion to her mother.

She was right in one thing: in thinking that Peggy felt her isolation. She was young, and life at the Rectory had been full and, within bounds, gay. She had had many friends, and among

her fellows had been valued for her high spirits and admired for the very wilfulness that had landed her where she was. She had been popular, a leader; and now to be shunned and sent to Coventry by those who had courted her and followed her was not and could not be pleasant. The treatment was bracing; it bred in her a wholesome contempt for the world's fickleness; but it hurt. Spending of necessity much time alone, she had moments of depression in which she saw herself reduced for the rest of her life to a lower level; and, being a woman with a woman's social values, she suffered.

But in the main she reacted bravely, and nine days out of ten she was able to lift herself above these feelings. She loved and was loved, and in the range of her home, confined as it was, she found far less to jar on her taste or wound her refinement than might have been expected. The cottage was small, and its plenishing poor, but its windows looked on a glorious view, it stood apart without near neighbours to overlook or offend, and it was her own. Within she reigned, and care and neatness were the homage paid to her presence by those who shared its cabin-like proportions. Not an hour passed that she had not to recognise their thought for her, and their care of her; and if the woman who came for an hour or two each day to do the rougher work was heavy-handed, she had two men-servants to make good what was lacking.

So as a rule Peggy was happy, and many an evening, as the winter approached, and she sat by the fireside, she owned the world well lost, though they were but whitewashed walls that gave back the light of the humble lamp. With Charles leaning over a chart and sailing again some ancient voyage, with the old man busy at his bench, carving a hull, with her own hands full of some domestic task, or her eyes on one of their few books, she told herself that she envied no one—that she could say with truth ‘A fig for their greatness!’

Yet she had her anxieties. With the insight of love she knew that Charles was not satisfied, and would never be satisfied while the burden of disgrace and failure weighed upon him. And of lifting that burden from his shoulders she saw no chance and no hope. It would always be a drawback to their happiness, and a cloud on their home. But it must be borne with and lightened.

Then in Beremouth that winter was a depressing one. The *Peggy* was out of commission, and some were the poorer for that, and Budgen was short of work and had reduced his small staff.

The cheerful noise of the hammers rose less often from the Cove, there were many days when it was wholly silent, and Peggy looking down on the idle sheds feared that Charles might be the next to lose his work, and the modest sum that it brought in. If that happened, and they were cast on the old Captain's tiny pension and slender pay, Charles would be driven to seek work elsewhere—and would it be possible for him to take her with him? Not at first, she feared; and on winter nights when the wind flung itself against the face of the cliffs and howled in the chimney of the cottage, and she could not sleep, it was a fear that wrung her heart. She would be separated from him! Poverty, hardship, the narrowest straits, she could bear all as long as he was with her. But she knew that he was too proud to live on his father, even if her own pride had not scorned the thought.

That fear, however, she was sedulous to hide. Charles might sit, as he sat too often, absent and moody, betraying to watchful eyes the anxiety that he felt. But she must smile. Stooping to tasks below his station, humouring Budgen's ill-temper, plodding at the rickety desk when all his tastes were for the open sea! If he could bear this, if he could lower himself to this, surely she could wear a cheerful face, since it was all that she could do to help him.

She told herself, indeed, and many times, that her burden was a light one. But it was not so light in the face of growing perplexity, and of the reports that were afloat in the town. Budgen, it was rumoured, was in low water. He was in a bad way. It was even whispered on the quay that he was like to be sold up. He could not find the money for another cruise—so, for the most part, they explained his inaction. He owed here and he owed there; and if peace came—and there was talk of peace, the Plymouth paper was full of it—the *Lively Peggy*, built for speed and with little cargo-room, would not be worth the copper sheathing that covered her bottom! She lay idle and useless at her moorings, and all kinds of stories were abroad. And as the winter wore on, all the stories were disquieting.

(To be continued.)

THE POLITICAL NOVEL.¹

It is very easy to make fun of politics and politicians, of Parliament and of the ways of the honourable and right honourable gentlemen who conduct parliamentary business. The thing has been done by Carlyle and Dickens and by living humorists like Max Beerbohm and Hilaire Belloc. Indeed, parliamentary life lends itself very well to humorous treatment. So much talk! So much platitude! So much pomposity! So many small intrigues intermingled with great affairs! So much stage-management of debates in the House and of public appearances in the country! The contrast between the tragic size of the issues and the pettiness of the devices which contribute to their effective handling, such as the orchid in the button-hole, the habitual use of the pipe (always a great electoral property), the size of the collar, the shape of the hat, or any other salient sartorial detail for which the public are reputed to have conceived an affection, furnishes excellent material for the Muse of Comedy. So, too, does the process by which ambition mounts the political ladder. In 'Mr. Clutterbuck's Election' Mr. Belloc depicts a half-wit who rises to Cabinet rank as a result of a broker's order given while he is in a state of delirium. The instruction turns out to be fortunate. Mr. Clutterbuck becomes a millionaire and is at once assumed to be a man of deep sagacity. Wholly ignorant of politics, he is captured by one of the political parties, provided with the requisite formulæ, hustled into Parliament and then on to the Treasury Bench. There is in the actual conduct of our political life just enough of deference to the brainless plutocrat to give salt to the satire.

It is not, however, my purpose to deal with the political farce or extravaganza. Mr. Belloc manages this kind of literature admirably, and conducts us from one impossible and ludicrous situation to another with a sustained pomposity which is exactly adapted to bring out the comic values of his piece.

Nor shall I delay you with a commentary upon what M. Cazamian has called 'Le Roman social.' Most novels, if they do not set out to depict the manners and structure of society at a given point of

¹ An address given to the Oxford Branch of the English Association.

time, supply material from which some notion of the social background of the story can be gained. But there is a class of novel to which the epithet 'social' can more specifically be applied. We have in England a body of imaginative prose literature directed in whole or part to the reformation of social evils. We think at once of Dickens, our prince of humorists, but also the ardent social reformer who in 'Pickwick' denounces imprisonment for debt, in 'Nicholas Nickleby' the cruel imposture of Yorkshire education, in 'Bleak House' the delays of the Court of Chancery, and in his 'Christmas Tales' sets out, as he avows, 'to strike a good blow for the poor.' We think of Mrs. Gaskell's 'Mary Barton' and 'North and South,' of Charles Kingsley's 'Yeast' and 'Alton Locke,' of George Eliot's 'Felix Holt,' of Charles Reade's 'It's Never Too Late to Mend,' and, crossing from fiction to drama, of Mr. Galsworthy's 'Justice.' The humanitarian movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is very fully reflected in our imaginative literature. Our novelists have not been content merely to amuse. '*Dès l'origine,*' writes M. Cazamian, '*le roman anglais est didactique.*' Certainly some of the best ethical teaching given to the British public in our age comes from the novelists.

Of all this side of romance I do not intend to speak here. Clearly it has been of great influence in our history. The novelists, of course, were not alone in pointing out such abuses as our barbarous criminal law and our cruel prison system, and the exploitation of child labour; their work forms but a small part of a great humanitarian protest; but in its effect upon public sentiment, in its power of stirring social compunction and of focussing popular attention upon evils which had only been feebly imagined, the novel was more influential than the public speech, the pamphlet, or the Blue-book. That fine criminal lawyer Sir James FitzJames Stephen was not well pleased with Charles Dickens. He distrusted the emotional treatment of grievances by an amateur with an innate gift for the use of the magnifying glass. He preferred the case for reform to be stated by responsible statesmen who had gone into the facts and could apply accurate measurements to the dimensions of the evil. To paint the social injustices of the age with so strong a brush was dangerous. That was the view of a conservative lawyer who resented the intrusions of a layman into the field of legal criticism. But the world has ample room for Dickens as well as for Bentham, and of the two, Dickens, if less rich in practical expedients, which were not in any case his business, was probably

the more effective in creating the atmosphere in which great abuses are remedied.

It is not, however, of these social reformers that I wish to speak to you. My theme is the political novel, and I propose to interpret this narrowly as the novel which chiefly concerns itself with men and women engaged in contemporary political life and discussing contemporary political ideas. Of this form of literature we have had two principal exponents in our own country, Disraeli and Anthony Trollope, the first one of the foremost statesmen of his age, the second not even for a single session a member of Parliament; the first flawless in his knowledge of parliamentary procedure, the second owing his acquaintance with the ways of the House of Commons to a few weeks as a visitor in the gallery, and so fallible in the tricks of the parliamentary trade that he is capable of effecting the introduction of a new Member before prayers and not, as of course we all know to be the case, after questions.

Disraeli then has a great advantage in point of experience. He had been seven years in the House, a brilliant observant back-bench member, before, in 1844, he burst upon the world with 'Coningsby,' his first political novel. 'Sybil' and 'Tancred' were published in 1845 and 1847 respectively, and then after a long interval came 'Lothair' and 'Endymion,' written out of the fullness of knowledge which comes to a man who has been leader of the House of Commons, Prime Minister, and one of the guiding political minds of Europe. Anthony Trollope, an official in the Post Office who never quite rose to the highest position in his own department, and was never in the course of business brought into connexion with the Cabinet, has not, of course, the same intimate knowledge of the way in which the business of the country is conducted. Trollope, however, had two advantages which exercise a compensating weight when thrown into the balance against these limitations. First, he was an English gentleman, and, second, he was a passionate rider to hounds. He knew, loved, and admired the type of Englishman who at that time counted most in English politics. He had an insight into the way in which English gentlemen and English ladies were likely to behave in any given set of circumstances, and more particularly of the way in which English gentlemen and ladies who rode to hounds were likely to look at the world. The country-house background to English politics, which counted so much in the later years of Lord Palmerston's life and which still counts a great deal in spite of the extension of the

suffrage, has never been more skilfully or affectionately described. And being thus able to paint English gentlemen and ladies *con amore*, he can give a very fair picture of English politics when they were still conducted by the aristocracy or landed gentry with some help from the more successful merchants and manufacturers.

One very serious difference separates the two men. Disraeli wrote his first three novels—'Coningsby,' 'Sybil,' and 'Tancred'—to form a new political evangel for the Tory party. His purpose was definitely missionary. He had something to say to the country, and he had come deliberately to the conclusion that having regard to the circumstances of the time he could speak his mind most effectively through the novel. In the general preface affixed to the edition of his works in 1870 he describes how

'born in a library and trained from early childhood by learned men who did not share the passions and prejudices of our political and social life he had imbibed some conclusions particularly with reference to English history different from those commonly entertained, how even as a boy he was attracted by the elements of our political parties and by the strange mystification by which that which was national in its constitution had become odious and that which was exclusive was represented as popular';

how after he had been some time in Parliament he found friends who shared his views, and how under the impulsion of one of these friends, Henry Hope, and at Hope's house at Deepdene, he was impelled to give literary form to his ideas. The result was the trilogy of novels, 'Coningsby,' 'Sybil,' 'Tancred.'

'The derivation and character of political parties, the condition of the people which had been the consequence of them, the duties of the Church as a main remedial agency in our present state were the three principal topics which I intended to treat.'

Disraeli then proceeds to point out what he conceives to be the essential message of the trilogy:

'It runs counter to the fashionable utilitarian views of the day. It recognises imagination in the government of nations as a quality no less important than reason. It tends much to a popular sentiment resting on an heroic tradition and sustained by the high spirit of a free aristocracy. It looks to the health and knowledge of the multitude as not the least precious part of the wealth of nations. In asserting the doctrine of race, it was entirely opposed to the equality of man and similar abstract doctrines. It held

that no society could be durable, unless it was built upon the principles of loyalty and religious reverence.'

Here is a whole philosophy of politics. It is true that when Sir Robert Peel read 'Coningsby' what charmed him most were the descriptions, and that Lord John Russell was moved to tears by the love scenes. But neither the love scenes nor the descriptions, brilliant as these are, constitute the importance of the trilogy, but the fact that it was the manifesto of Young England and that it provided the Tory party with a faith calculated to stand the wind and weather of the modern world. The author was an artist, but a prophet as well. When Lord Henry Lennox was embarking on a political career, Disraeli recommended him to read 'Coningsby' as an initiation, much as Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb might recommend 'Industrial Democracy' to a political tyro.

Anthony Trollope was not concerned with providing for his readers a new political gospel. He professed, indeed, to have some political views, and once in late life offered himself for Parliament. He describes himself as a Conservative Liberal, but, though he had picked up the kind of information about politics which comes to a capable civil servant who frequents London clubs and spends his holidays following the fox-hounds, he was no Messiah. His trilogy—for he too is the author of a political trilogy, 'Phineas Finn,' 'Phineas Redux,' and 'The Prime Minister'—is no manifesto. Nobody on laying down these excellent novels could say, as George Smythe said after reading 'Coningsby,' 'Thank God, I have a faith at last!' And, indeed, when we come to interrogate Anthony Trollope's faith, it does not emerge as a clear-cut philosophy of politics. He has no subversive views of English history to preach to the world. He has no theories as to the rôle of religion in political life. He is interested in politics only to the extent to which all healthy Englishmen who live in their own times share in the political movements of their age. Foreign affairs are not to his liking. The stuff out of which the web of Oriental politics is woven, so delicately painted in 'Tancred,' with its brilliant evocation of the attractive, sensitive, shifting Syrian, was quite outside his range of vision. What Trollope saw was England, and that he saw with great passion and intentness. Nobody has delineated with more affectionate insight the political Englishman of the ruling class. Just as in the Barchester series he creates a whole society of clerical characters centring round Mrs. Proudie, so in his political series he

gives life to a group of Englishmen and English-women, of whom Plantagenet Palliser and his wife, Lady Glencora, are his chief favourites, in order that he may bring out 'the virtues, the graces, and the strength of our highest classes, and show them predominant over their faults, frailties, and vices.'

Trollope's political novels have never been very great favourites with the British public. Perhaps they are too long. Perhaps, as he suggests, it was a mistake to make a handsome young Irish adventurer the nominal hero of the first two novels of the series. But Trollope himself took these books very seriously and thought them very good.

'By no amount of description or asseveration [he writes] could I succeed in making my reader understand how much these characters and their belongings have been to me in my later life; or how frequently I have used them for the expression of my political or social convictions. They have been as real to me as Free Trade was to Mr. Cobden or the dominion of a party to Mr. Disraeli; and as I have not been able to speak from the benches of the House of Commons or to thunder from platforms or to be efficacious as a lecturer, they have served me as safety valves by which to deliver my soul.'

As for his real hero, Plantagenet Palliser (afterwards Duke of Omnium), he writes that he thinks him to be 'a very noble gentleman, such an one as justifies to the nation the seeming anomaly of an hereditary peerage and of primogeniture,' and that 'he stands more firmly on the ground than any other personage I have created.'

An author's judgment of his own work may not always correspond with the verdict of the best critics, but it is very seldom wholly awry, and when Trollope tells us that he regards Reginald Palliser as his most life-like character and the string of characters portrayed in his political trilogy as the best work of his life, we cannot brush this opinion aside as of no account. It is clear that Trollope's political trilogy, if less famous than Disraeli's corresponding series and less popular than the Barchester novels, does not deserve to fall into oblivion.

As writers of English prose the two men stand upon different planes. Disraeli is always brilliant and distinguished, abounding in delicate malice and political aphorism and sometimes rising to very high levels of melodious eloquence. By comparison Trollope's prose is of very plain homely texture. Perhaps one might almost

say of him as a critic once said of Mérimée, that he writes 'with the perfection of nobody's style,' so free is he of tricks and affectations. He has, however, one great virtue. He never fails to see the objects which he intends to describe in all their proportions and details. Like De Foe, the founder of the English novel, he looks at life through plain glass. A conventional mind no doubt, moving within marked limitations, but inspired by powerful and genuine affections and served by a rare gift for observing men and women of his own age and class.

Now, in Disraeli's novels there is enthusiasm and there is cynicism, and these are sometimes so subtly blended that it is often difficult to tell where the enthusiasm ends and the cynicism begins; but in Trollope the predominant note is affection. You will notice that Trollope was really in love with Reginald Palliser and Lady Glencora, as much in love with them as Mrs. Gaskell must have been in love with Molly Gibson and Miss Matty; and he is remarkably successful in communicating his affection to his readers. It would be difficult for anyone to read 'The Prime Minister' (1876), which is the finest as it is the latest act of the trilogy, without feeling that Trollope has drawn an admirable specimen of an English public man belonging to an aristocratic family, and that he has appreciated with a delicate fidelity the weighty temperament in affairs which the best and most unselfish members of that class not infrequently display. Indeed, the whole circle of the Pallisers—Lord Cheetham, the hunting peer, and his charming wife, Lady Laura Standish, Mrs. Max Goesler, and the rest—are so drawn that it is clear that the author's principal object is to excite an affection for them in the hearts of his readers. He does not so much care about the theory of politics as about the characters, not by any means flawless or mysterious or brilliantly endowed, but essentially sweet and sound and rightly directed, in which the best political life of the country was at that time, as he conceived it, incarnate.

Now Disraeli was a far more romantic man than Trollope. Even as a septuagenarian he was overflowing with romantic enthusiasm, in love with Lady Bradford, in love with Lady Chesterfield, sending *billets-doux* two, three times a day from the Treasury Bench. And it is clear that there is nothing which he enjoys so much as drawing the portrait of a beautiful, dazzling, witty peeress dowered with all the gifts which fortune can bestow and the gorgeous setting in which such a creation moves and has her being. His descriptions of female beauty are minute and fastidious, and, acting on the

principle enounced in 'Endymion' that 'it is private life that governs the world,' he crowds his canvas with ladies, mostly of the highest degree and exercising a great influence on the male characters in the drama. Yet what reader falls in love with them? We are quite ready to concede that in each one of Disraeli's political novels there are several ladies whose portraits, painted by the fashionable artist of the day, would draw admiring crowds at the Royal Academy, and whose conversation would be worth 'two good entrées at the dinner-table.' But the saintly or prophetic ladies are too unearthly and mystical to stir the human affections; and the worldly ladies are just too mundane. Perhaps Theodora, the beautiful Italian nationalist in 'Lothair,' is the most attractive of these political beauties. We are made to feel her strength and enthusiasm, but even in her there is a touch of affectation. 'I live,' she says, 'for the climate and the affections.' The other ladies who are specially commended to us are, it may be, too obviously ambitious to be quite delightful. 'Dear darling,' says Myra to her brother Endymion, 'if you are to be a clergyman, I should like you to be a cardinal.' A very proper sisterly ambition no doubt, but an ambition which leads a long way and ultimately establishes the resolute lady on the throne of Prince Florestan.

The same observation holds good of Disraeli's male characters. They are drawn with infinite cleverness, but they never succeed in being lovable. The heroes, Coningsby, Tancred, Lothair, Endymion, are quite incapable of inspiring sympathy, and leave but a faint impression on the memory. Another class of character—peculiar to Disraeli—is equally powerless over the emotions. These are the mysterious figures who are brought in to deliver the solemn political or religious oracles, Sidonia, the Paraclete in 'Tancred,' or the Buddhist in the unfinished novel printed in the fifth volume of Mr. Buckle's Life.

The really human characters are those which are drawn either with a touch of malice or with a definite note of satire or hostility, Lord Monmouth and Mr. Rigby and Mrs. Guy Flouncey and the Duchess of Bellamont and the Cardinal and priests in 'Lothair.' From these we may derive an infinite fund of entertainment; but they do not engage our affections and are not intended to do so.

The fame of Disraeli's political novels then does not stand upon the characters. What principally matters to Disraeli is the politics. It amuses him to put into circulation his political ideas, and he finds the novel the most convenient vehicle for doing this, more

particularly since it enables him to satirise persons for whom he has conceived a dislike, such as Croker, Goldwin Smith, Bishop Wilberforce, and Gladstone. How seriously those political ideas were entertained or rather what ideas were seriously held and what thrown out for the amusement of seeing how they would look on paper, probably not even the author himself would be able to determine. The reader can never be quite certain when Disraeli is laughing at him or whether he really meant anything at all by some of his oracular declarations. 'Announce the sublime and solemn doctrine of theocratic equality,' says a mighty form to Tancred, 'with thought rather than melancholy' speaking from 'the pensive passion of his eyes'; but whether Disraeli conceived that anything could possibly come of such an announcement or what particular value, if any, he attached to it, is quite mysterious. He was probably sincere in thinking that theology requires an apprenticeship of a thousand years, to say nothing of clime and race, and that therefore he, as a privileged Oriental, was at liberty to throw dust with a liberal hand into the eyes of the Western barbarians.

It is obvious again that he had the Oriental love of secrecy and mystification. His last novel 'Endymion' was kept an absolute secret even from his intimates, and was handed over to his publisher at Hughenden with the most elaborate precautions against even his confidential valet. 'I hate a straightforward fellow,' says one of the characters in 'Lothair.' 'As Pinto says, if every man were straightforward in his opinions there would be no conversation.' Disraeli knew the social value of a little mystification, how there is nothing which people like more than an enigma, and so it was part of his art to keep the world guessing, as he displayed his iridescent panorama, in which oracular religion and social compunction were mingled with the ambition and the cynicism of the accomplished man of the world.

From the purely political point of view the most important of his novels is 'Sybil,' which portrays with great eloquence and sincerity the miseries of the working-classes and the dangerous contrast between wealth and poverty. As a story 'Sybil' is not equal to 'Coningsby' and as a work of art far inferior to 'Lothair'; but it is the most remarkable and influential of all Disraeli's novels by reason of the power and fidelity with which the dark features of our social organisation were revealed to the country. Here it is well to remember dates. 'Sybil' was published in 1845, earlier

than Karl Marx's 'Das Capital' or than Mrs. Gaskell's 'Mary Barton' which came out in 1848, or than Charles Reade's 'It's Never Too Late to Mend' which was published in 1857. It was a pioneer book. The whole programme of the Labour Party is contained in its pages.

From the standpoint of their political content the three early novels, 'Coningsby,' 'Tancred,' and 'Sybil,' constitute Disraeli's most serious work in fiction. It is in these novels that he gave to the Tory party and to the country his political message. The two later novels, 'Lothair' (1870) and 'Endymion' (1880), were written for amusement. In literary finish and accomplishment 'Lothair' seems to me to stand first among his novels. It depicts with delicious humour the struggle of the Churches for the soul of a very wealthy young nobleman—a theme suggested to the author by the recent reception into the Church of Rome of the Marquis of Bute—and the utmost ingenuity is displayed in the contrivance of piquant situations. The boy's two trustees, one a narrow old Scottish Presbyterian peer, the other a polished English Cardinal, the high-bred young ladies with whom he is thrown into relations, one a devout Papist, the other a conventional Anglican, the third a passionate Roman nationalist, supply plenty of diverting contrast.

There are few more amusing passages in Disraeli than that in which the Cardinal solemnly argues that Lothair, who was seriously wounded on the field of Mentana fighting against the Pope, had in truth been fighting on the opposite side. But it is difficult to know how far Disraeli was serious in all this. Nor does it much matter. The whole novel is a brilliant piece of high comedy.

Apart from their solid core of doctrine Disraeli's political novels possess a special interest by reason of the fact that they portray, under more or less flimsy disguises, a number of historical passages. Thus Lord Monmouth is the third Marquis of Hertford, also satirised in 'Vanity Fair,' while Du Ferrol is Bismarck and Prince Florestan Napoleon III. The satirical portrait of Lord Houghton, 'he was everywhere and at everything; he had gone down in a diving bell and up in a balloon. He was the steward of Polish balls and the vindicator of Russian humanity; he dined with Louis Philippe and gave dinners to Louis Blanc,' is well known. What is less familiar, because it has only seen the light with the publication of Mr. Buckle's penultimate volume, is the skit on Mr. Gladstone under the *alias* of Joseph Toplady Falconet in the fragment of a novel discovered among the statesman's papers. Disraeli's sketch is far from being

a photograph, but then fidelity to an original model is not expected of the artist who labels his picture with a fictitious name.

Of course *Der alte Jude*, as Bismarck called him, knew all the ins and outs of the Parliamentary game. He knew that 'a man should be in Parliament early and that there is a sort of stiffness about every man, no matter what may be his talents, who enters Parliament late in life.' He knew that no government could be secure without a formidable opposition, and that 'the first requisite in the successful conduct of foreign affairs is a personal acquaintance with the statesmen engaged.' Nobody better than he had a right to say that the relations between a minister and his secretary should be the finest that can subsist between two individuals. On all such questions he can speak with a weight of authority which no other novelists treating of politics can claim.

In wealth of epigram Disraeli's novels were in their own day unsurpassed. A florilegium may easily be gathered from the five political novels alone.

"A sound conservative Government," said Taper musingly. "I understand. Tory men and Whig measures."

"I don't see why Ramsbrooke should have the Buckhounds any more than anybody else. What sacrifices has he made?"

"Past sacrifices are nothing," said Lord Eskdale, "present sacrifices are the things we want; men who will sacrifice their principles and join us."

"A practical man is a man who practises the blunders of his predecessors."

"Divisions in the House of Lords are now so thinly scattered, that when one occurs the press cackle as if they had laid an egg."

"You know who the critics are? The men who have failed in literature and art."

"Action may not always be happiness, but there is no happiness without action."

And so on, and so on.

But no florilegium would do Disraeli justice. These pointed phrases are not like plums in a cake. They are an integral and distinctive quality of his fastidious prose. To sever them from their natural context is to do them unright. A very different master of English was Anthony Trollope. He had none of the affectations of Disraeli, none of his lofty flights or rhapsodies, or gift of poetical description; none of his crispness or delicate malice or barbed and pointed wit; but he saw his characters clearly,

planted their feet on the ground and could so describe them in his sound easy flowing English, as to make them real flesh and blood for his readers, more real and more human than any of the brilliant figures of the Tory statesman, for all his wider experience of the world and of great affairs.

As an illustration of this proposition, let me cite Reginald Palliser, the Duke of Omnium, as he appears in the pages of Trollope's 'The Prime Minister.' To me this hypersensitive, dutiful, modest Englishman is a most attractive and pathetic figure; and the more so by reason of the domestic trials which are superadded to his public cares by the masculine ambitions of his spirited but not altogether judicious wife. Whether a man quite so thin-skinned as Reginald Palliser could ever have risen to be Prime Minister is another story. Perhaps the fact that he was heir to a Dukedom and undoubtedly a good Departmental chief would have been considered a sufficient counterpoise to his undoubted lack of brilliance and self-assurance. But the very fact that he is wanting in all those dazzling qualities which are characteristic of Disraeli's principal figures makes the impression of his goodness and scrupulosity and high standard of disinterested public duty more impressive. That he considers himself to be a failure is half his charm.

It is true also to say of Trollope that he gives a very faithful picture of the way in which the public life of the country was carried on in mid-Victorian times. There is the due admixture of personalities and principles, and a very fair presentation of the difficulties likely to confront an impecunious but ambitious young Member of Parliament without family interest who desires to make himself a great parliamentary name. Trollope's trilogy, however, is not so exclusively political as are the five political novels of Disraeli. In Disraeli there are love stories, but they are very closely related to the political movement. In 'Lothair,' the most perfectly constructed of all the political novels, the three principal ladies represent three contending political and religious forces, Ultramontaniam, Italian Nationalism, and Anglicanism. In Trollope the connexion between the love episodes and the politics is in general less intimate. Trollope in fact seems to have felt that his readers wanted a love story of the ordinary sort and that this must somehow be supplied them, and in 'The Prime Minister' we have in fact two stories, one the story of the loves of Emily Wharton, and the other the story of the quiet, modest, retiring Prime Minister and of his bustling and entertaining wife who so bitterly resents

being obliged at the end to exchange the brandy of office for the light claret of private life. In a word Trollope seems to have thought that a novel which occupied itself exclusively with political interests would not do. There must be more excitement than English Parliamentary politics could reasonably supply. So he makes his hero, Phineas Finn, rescue an unpleasant Scotch Calvinist from garrotters, fight a duel in Belgium with a rival in love, and actually has him tried for the murder of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. As if this were not sufficient, he makes him fall in love successively with four ladies, and ultimately, after he has been acquitted of murder, promotes him to be Chief Secretary for Ireland and First Lord of the Admiralty. There are also scattered about the three volumes some excellent hunting chapters, for what is the use of a novelist keeping a stable of four hunters and falling into all the ditches in the county of Essex if he cannot from time to time make use of his experiences in the hunting-field? So it will be seen that the strong wine of politics is plentifully diluted. There is something, indeed, for every taste. Nobody need fear to read Trollope's political novels on account of their doctrine. A Whig will not turn Tory nor a Tory turn Whig by reason of anything which he may learn from these novels. Indeed, it would be somewhat difficult to disengage the political philosophy of the author from 'Phineas Finn' and its successors. Phineas is a Liberal, and from this we may conclude that the author is a Liberal too—but he is a very mild kind of Liberal and perhaps the principal political lesson to be derived from his teaching is that the two parties were not really very far from one another, that there was much common ground between them, and that though coalitions were unpopular, the men who actually served in them had little difficulty in coming to an agreement. It is clear also that, despite his liberalism, Trollope had a very deep sympathy with the English aristocracy. He liked an English gentleman and excelled in painting him. Here he was more successful than Disraeli.

Both from Disraeli and from Trollope it would appear that women play a large part in English political life. Perhaps they exaggerated here, Disraeli from personal temperament, and Trollope out of deference to the accepted conventions of the novelist's art. The idea of a political romance destitute of love interest would have been far too violent an innovation for that age.

To the present generation politics are more poignant. In the spring of 1923 all Berlin flocked to a play on the dismissal of

Bismarck ('Die Entlassung') which contained no love interest at all and only one female character and that an old lady who played an inconsiderable rôle. Yet the excitement was immense. When Bismarck remonstrates with the young Kaiser for abandoning the Russian for the Austrian alliance and closes his speech with the remark 'Then, sire, it is a war on two fronts,' the whole audience shivered with emotion. Our great Victorian novelists essayed no such concentration of political interest. They knew their public, and in their richly diversified offering included as much politics as their public would stand. Since then fashions have altered. We have become more patient of technicalities, more restless under sentiment; and it may be that some lady member of this company, after a successful Parliamentary career, will capture the reading public with a novel from which all motives of an amatory and even of a private character have been artfully expunged. In that event I shall plead the privilege of senescence, and leaving the *magnum opus* to the more refined taste of my juniors beg permission to revert to my old-fashioned Victorian favourites, Dizzy and Trollope.

H. A. L. FISHER.

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‘WHEN WE TWO PARTED’: A BYRON
MYSTERY RE-SOLVED.

BY JOHN GORE.

BYRON is a literary mine which shows not the smallest sign of working out. It is safe to say that no poet, in the hundred years succeeding his death, ever inspired an interest so vivid, so sustained, so wide. In the civilised world beyond Britain, nation after nation catches the enthusiasm which his peculiar genius and fantastic life story kindled and keeps burning in France, and any fresh light on Byron to-day is certain to attract widespread attention not only in that country but in America, Germany, Greece, Italy and many smaller countries of Europe. In England, new books on Byron persistently attract attention and discussion; new theories, fresh researches, the latest discoveries, quickly send out of date the last authority on the poet; editions of his letters follow each other in regular sequence, and no volume, however elaborate, can yet claim the label ‘The final word on Byron.’

Stranger still, and full of romance for those who go treasure seeking in the world of literature, we are not yet at the end of our discoveries of fresh manuscripts. Not a doubt but, in the length of Britain, there still lie, dusty and unremembered, packets of his letters which very likely throw fresh light on Byron controversies and resolve some of the riddles of his life of which we still love to write and read.

Such a packet of letters has lately come into my hands, and it is unnecessary to say that the deciphering and copying of them afforded me that mild thrill which attends all literary searches after Flint’s treasure. The packet in question contained five letters in all, written from Albaro under dates in 1822–23. It will be recalled that in September 1822, when within one year and seven months of his death, Byron left Pisa and went to Genoa. Here for ten months he stayed with the Gambas at Casa Saluzzi, Albaro. Here he wrote his last important poetry (cantos 12–16 of ‘Don Juan’), while he negotiated with the London Greek Committee. Here, too, came to him and Leigh Hunt the first number of the ill-fated and short-lived *Liberal*.

Teresa Guiccioli was with him at Albaro, their passion burning low again after its revival, and his daily companions were the Blessingtons and her 'Cupid in thrall,' the young Comte d'Orsay. In his voluminous correspondence during this phase, Byron freely voiced his opinions on all current subjects, filling pages with his hopes and despair of the Greek adventure, with disparagement of the Hunts, regrets for his last attack on the memory of Castlereagh, the future of the Guiccioli, his state of feelings for Lady Blessington, opinions on young d'Orsay, and generally with notes and comments on his own hot youth (now assuredly for ever gone!) and on the controversies which still raged round his name and conduct in England.

The recipient of this particular packet of letters was his distant cousin, Lady Hardy, daughter of Sir George Berkeley¹ and wife of Nelson's Admiral Hardy. From her they have descended to her granddaughter, Mrs. John Thynne, who recognised their possible literary interest.

As I proceeded with the work of transcribing the letters, interest in the find increased. Clearly, the letters were in Byron's best vein, were sane and on the whole cheerful, recalled the best type of his correspondence with men friends, and seemed full of light on many controversial subjects. In an effort to elucidate one or two obscure words, I turned to Moore's 'Life' to examine other contemporary letters and suddenly found myself reading familiar words. Moore, it seemed, despite the tradition that these letters had never left their casket, had access to the packet when writing his 'Life of Byron.'

Further research proved that of the five letters, Moore had incorporated excerpts from two in his 'Life' and, addressed to 'Lady ——,' they figure there as Nos. 507 and 522. Whether Moore never saw the others, or saw but rejected them, is uncertain. I am of opinion that Lady Hardy, for whom Byron entertained nothing but the most respectful admiration, shunned publicity, insisted on anonymity and, because one at least of the remaining letters communicated to her an exclusive secret, withheld a portion of her correspondence from Moore. Be that as it

¹ Anne Louisa Emily, daughter of Admiral Sir George Berkeley, married firstly, in 1807, Admiral Sir Thomas Masterman Hardy, Bart., G.C.B., and secondly, in 1840, Lord Seaford. At the date of the letters she was in the early thirties. Byron's great-grandmother, wife of the 4th Lord Byron, was a daughter of Lord Berkeley of Stratton. Thus arose the relationship between the correspondents.

may, the remaining letters have never before been given to the world, and at last enable us to solve a minor Byron mystery concerning which many writers have speculated and offered solutions.

Lord Byron whimsically makes a deed of gift to Lady Hardy of the circumstances under which he wrote the most lovely of all his short poems, 'When we two parted,' and the name of the lady to whom they were addressed. He tells her that the poem was addressed to Lady Frances Webster, and that a false date was deliberately inserted to mislead, and he gives her a final and unpublished stanza which proves his statement beyond question.

These unpublished letters therefore show Lord Lovelace to have been wrong in asserting that the poem was addressed to Mrs. Leigh, and Miss Mayne to have made a very shrewd guess at the truth. Beyond the additional fact that they establish the identity of certain anonymously addressed letters in published works on Byron, an anonymity which no one seems ever to have guessed, no further capital is sought to be made out of them. It is my endeavour to restrict the issue rigorously, because other material in the unpublished letters, even if new, throws no new light on accepted truth.

I will briefly recapitulate the facts in Byron's life which are relevant to the solution of this small but not uninteresting mystery and then quote the letters themselves.

Augusta Mary, Byron's half-sister, was born in 1784, and her mother died in giving her birth. Byron, only child of Captain Byron's second marriage, was born in 1788. In 1807 Augusta married her cousin, Col. George Leigh, and lived with him unhappily at Six Mile Bottom. As children, she and Byron were separately brought up, and it was not until she had been several years a wife and mother that they met with any frequency. In 1813 Byron began to see a great deal of her, and in August of that year he brought her back with him to London from her home at Newmarket and told Lady Melbourne that he proposed to take her abroad. Lady Melbourne, foreseeing the danger of such a proposal, succeeded in dissuading him from this course, and deliberately substituted an alternative distraction by persuading him to pay a visit to his friend Wedderburn Webster at Aston Hall, Rotherham. He went there on September 21 and soon began a hot courtship of his friend's young wife. Lady Frances Webster was a daughter of the first Earl of Mountnorris (8th Viscount Valentia) and had at this time been married three years and was but twenty years old. Byron had for some time been intimate with Webster and indeed lent him £1000

in this same year (a debt which is referred to in my packet of correspondence, being only repaid under pressure at the date of these new letters). Shortly before his first visit Byron had consented to be godfather to their expected baby.

His conquest of Lady Frances proved as swift and successful as the intrigue was short-lived. By the beginning of 1816 he was able to discuss her virtue with Murray with cynical irony. Never were the times so favourable for the mightiest of all Don Juans, and the hour found the man in Byron. Webster was a bad man, a weak man, a bore and a buffoon—his wife a spoilt child—Byron at the height of his glory. Small wonder that he found resistance disappointingly weak. The wonder lies in Lady Melbourne's incredible cold-bloodedness over the affair. She cheered him on to the quarry and at the very height of his passion was recipient of regular bulletins as to its progress. Published correspondence of Byron's at this time shows that he alternately relented, pursued and feared discovery by the outraged husband.

On January 2, 1815, Byron married at Seaham Miss Annabella Milbanke, only child of Sir Ralph Milbanke. On December 10, 1815, a baby—Augusta Ada—was born at 13, Piccadilly Terrace. On Sunday, April 21, 1816, a deed of separation between husband and wife was signed. No reason for their parting was made public on either side. Rumours and speculations were rife. The most serious was to the effect that a guilty connexion existed between Byron and his half-sister, Augusta. In 1869, nine years after the death of Lady Byron, Mrs. Beecher Stowe electrified the world by the announcement that Lady Byron had confided to her that the story of the guilt of Byron and Augusta was in fact true.

The publication of Lord Lovelace's 'Astarte' brought together much convincing evidence supporting this belief. It is unnecessary for me to enter into the lists on the question, and indeed the lists are closed.

Byron's courtship of Lady Frances at the time when he moved to Alvaro in 1822 (the date of our letters) had been relegated with a score of other stale amours to the dusty limbo of his memory.

At precisely the same time, Webster, once fair-haired but now 'with his black wig, and his mistresses and his easy sense of honour,' was on the eve of a separation from his wife. At Webster's request Byron tried in 1823 to bring about a reconciliation, but, needless to say, Lady Frances showed no inclination to yield to the intervention of one who a few years back had played so different a part.

One further point only need be referred to, to make clear certain allusions in the letters. Webster, preoccupied with his financial and matrimonial troubles, yet found time to pay hopeless court to Lady Hardy, recipient of my letters. Greatly admired and perfectly virtuous, it is needless to add that she met his advances without encouragement, and Byron and she exchange light-hearted badinage concerning her shop-soiled and down-at-heel 'Chevalier.'

I append from Miss Mayne's 'Byron' (pp. 260-261) the paragraph in which she hazards her shrewd guess as to the circumstances which led to the writing of 'When we two parted,' a guess which my packet of letters proves conclusively to be correct. On Miss Mayne's book I have freely drawn in compiling the bare facts relevant to the issue.

'Many of the best-known lyrics were written between 1814 and 1816. "Farewell! if ever fondest prayer" belongs to the former year; "When we two parted"—by many reckoned the finest short poem he ever wrote—to the latter. Both are believed by Lord Lovelace to have been addressed to Mrs. Leigh; but it is worth remarking that in February 1816 James Wedderburn Webster brought an action against one Baldwin for a libel charging Lady Frances and the Duke of Wellington with adultery. Webster obtained £2000; and on February 16 there is an ironic letter from Byron to Murray: "I thank you for the account of Mr. and Lady F.W.'s triumph; you see by it the exceeding advantage of unimpeachable virtue and uniform correctness of conduct, etc. etc." It is quite legitimate (with the knowledge of his reference to the love letters from him that Lady Frances had) to conjecture that the lines of "When we two parted" were inspired by this incident.'

THE LETTERS. No. 1.¹

A visit of farewell—an attack from the pulpit—Lady Jersey's daughter—women's compensation in children.

Byron to Lady Hardy.

ALBANO, Sept. 7th, 1822.

'My dear . . . , I don't know whether to say "cousin" but the relationship is your own fault, for you told me at some Masquerade or party in 1814 (you see I have a *long* memory if not an accurate one) that there was some connection between the Berkeleys and Byrons, and that is enough for one who is half a Scotsman to

¹ Copyright in this and the following letters (other than certain excerpts from two of them, published in Moore's *Life*) is vested in the writer of this article.

found a pedigree upon. But to continue—I will ride down at half past two to-morrow to take another leave of you, for such it seems to be ordained rather than a renewal of "auld lang syne." I said "half past two," that I might not by naming an earlier hour deprive you of the benefit of divine service where it is not impossible you may hear the English Chaplain preach against me—at least the one at Pisa did me that honour some time ago.

'I had heard that Lady Jersey was very glad of the female acquisition after the number of little Honourable Misters with which she had presented Jersey. The picture of mine is also still detained by the unfilial duties of the . . . (six lines missing) . . . but of course a prodigy like all *only* children. You talk of your three—I envy you their company which is one advantage which women have over men—and they ought to have many more—to compensate for our tyranny.

'Believe me, my dear . . . (fill up the blank with cousin if you wish it) with equal sincerity and . . . cetera desunt.'

No. 2.¹

Webster's lamentations—and his new wig—friendship between men and women.

To Lady Hardy, at Hotel de Londres, Genoa.

ALBARO, Nov. 10th, 1822.

'My dear "Cousin (*not*) of Buckingham and sage grave Woman." It was my intention to have answered your letter sooner but in the interim your Chevalier arrived and calling on me had not been two minutes in the room (though I had not seen him for these nine years) before he began a long story about you which I cut short as well as I could by telling him that I knew you and was a relative and was not desirous of his confidence on the subject. He however persisted in declaring himself an ill used gentleman and describing you as a kind of cold Calypso who leads astray people of an amatory disposition without giving them any sort of compensation, contenting yourself, it seems, with only making one fool instead of two which is the more approved method on such occasions.

'For my part I think you quite right, and be assured from me that a woman who (as Society is constituted in England) gives any advantage to a man, may expect a lover but will sooner or later find a tyrant. And this may not perhaps be the man's fault neither but is the necessary and natural result of the circumstances of Society which in fact tyrannise over the man equally with the woman—that is to say, if either of them have any feeling or honour.

¹ This letter is printed (with the omission of a few lines) in Moore's *Life* (No. 507).

He (the Chevalier) bored me so upon the subject that I greatly fear (Heaven forgive me, for you won't) that I said something about the "transmutation of hair" but I was surprised into it by his wanting to make me out that his black wig was the shock (or shocking) flaxen poodle furniture with which nature had decorated his head ten years ago.

'He is gone post to Leghorn in pursuit of you, having (I presume in consequence of your disappearance) actually (no jest I assure you) advertised for an "agreeable companion in a post chaise" in the Genoa Gazette. I enclose you the paragraph. Have you found any benefit for your girl from the L Baths? or are you gone to Florence? You can write to me at your leisure or inclination. I have always laid it down as a maxim—and found it justified by experience—that a man and woman can make far better friendships than can exist between two of the same sex, but *then* with this condition that they never have made or are to make love with each other. Lovers may—and indeed generally are—enemies but they never can be friends because there must always be a spice of jealousy and a something of self in all their speculations. Indeed I rather look on love as a sort of hostile transaction, very necessary to make or to break in order to keep the world a-going, but by no means a sinecure to the parties concerned.

'Now, as *my* Love perils are I believe pretty well over and yours by all accounts are never to begin, we shall be the best friends imaginable—so far as both are concerned—and with this advantage that we may both fall to loving right and left through all our acquaintance without either sullenness or sorrow from that amiable passion which are its inseparable attendants.

'I address this at hazard to Leghorn. Believe me, my dear Coz,
'ever very affect^{ly} yours
'N. B.'

No. 3.

'Of broken bones'—a chevalier in love and in debt—Byron on Lady Frances—the best route to Genoa—the brawl at Pisa—Mr. Taaffe's ignoble part—pacifying Trelawny—Lady Jersey—sick of Society.

To the Lady Hardy, Dama Inglese (Florence).

GENOA, February 17th, 1823.

'My dear Cousin—Your letter arrived as I was on the point of answering the former—not forgotten—nor neglected—but my acknowledgement was postponed from day to day till I was afraid that a dilatory reply might look worse than none at all—especially

as I thought you might return by the same route and I could gossip by word of mouth instead of puzzling you with my hieroglyphics. But "your speech is of broken bones"—I thought you broke nothing but hearts, but you see how the Gods avenge harmless flirtation. . . . The subject however is too serious for buffoonery and I rejoice that I should not hear of your accident till your recovery. I am enough acquainted with, and too impatient under, pain myself, not to sympathise with your sufferings, less than what you must have undergone—but women bear these things better than men and additional proof whereof is that you have fought through the Carnival with your arm in a sling; a General would have been carried off the field and not returned quite so gallantly perhaps. I hope that your valour—like virtue—has been its own reward and that the arrival of Lent has found you equally able to sustain its privations.

'Your Chevalier errant is here and more errant, though still stationary, than usual—and that is much. He has embroiled himself with two absent friends—a Sir F.V.—and some Caledonian Chief of the race of Diarmid—Mr. Campbell of Glensaddle—both of whom have cut him by letter—for reason which—as I have nothing to do with—I cannot pretend to explain. There are also some high and doubtful questions with his landlord of the Croix de Malte, his tailor, his shoemaker, and finally his valet; also his banker and two other bankers who have manifested an unaccountable aversion from his bills unless guaranteed by an amicable endorsement—a "backing of one's friends" which *Pylades* himself would probably have avoided. All these woes—to say nothing of others—he lays to *your* door for having lured him with deceitful hopes to this mercenary country where a man must actually pay for his provisions. To console himself for your rigour, on his return he paid his court to a very pretty Madame Quaotava,¹ the wife of a rich Banker, but his bills seemed not less unacceptable to the lady than her husband—for neither of them would cash his love or money at whatever discount.

'Messrs. Gibbs were equally inexorable in the pecuniary part, but we will see what is to be done and get him back to Lausanne, and if possible to his wife—which is an important episode by the way, for he is moving Heaven and Earth for a reconciliation. She is at Paris; I knew her soon after their marriage and him some years before when he was in the Hussars, and I was a Collegian.

She was very beautiful—and more romantic than wise—and that unlucky kind of woman who can do nothing with an Ecclat, so that the wonder is, that they were not separated before. He

¹ (?) Quastava.

has bored me into being a Mediator in his behalf, attracted doubtless by my own signal success in amicably arranging my matrimonial affairs. I have consequently addressed the Lady—in a most respectful and conciliatory epistle—representing with all the eloquence of common place that very trite truism that all quarrels are bad but those of Holy Matrimony the very worst of all. I do not know that it will do any good but at least it can only hurt myself; if they make it up—well and good; if not, they will both fall upon the Pacificator according to the ancient custom.

‘You ask me as to the prudence of coming by sea to Genoa. If I had the direction of the winds, like the Philosopher in *Rasselas*, I should know how to answer. The passage is made from Leghorn daily and with safety but I know not how far the presence of an Admiral’s Consort might tempt the ocean who was very gallant in the old time. But you might come by the good (*not* the *new*) road as far as Lerici overland and embark either from Lerici (on the Gulph) or Spezia—for Sestri or Genoa—and arrive at the former (at least) in a few hours under sail with a tolerable wind or by dint of rowing in a calm. There is nothing very formidable in either. I made the passage after being laid up for four days on a sick bed in a sordid Inn; got to Sestri by twilight (with oars by the way) and came on to Genoa by land which I reached before dawn and recovered entirely, I believe, by the amphibian journey. But you had better—if you decide on the sea—avoid the Equinox—which will occur about the period of your proposed departure. I would send round my *Goletta* for you—but she is laid up and is too small for the accommodation of a family though she is a good “Summer Bark” as the poets say. I hope however you will pass this way—though your Escort is departed. I daresay you have relays upon the road. I have not received Lord Dillon’s book, but am equally obliged, pray say so.

‘I hear very little of Mr. Taaffe¹ and it would have been as well if that little had been less. He involved me and some other Englishmen in a squabble with a drunken dragoon and the guard on *his* account entirely—and then kept aloof on pretence of having lost his hat. This happened at Pisa. One was wounded, another arrested, myself and the fourth rode through the Guard and the affray closed in the Dragoon’s being wounded—for some time supposed mortally—but the rascal recovered. Mr. Taaffe never made his re-appearance (after having been the first insulted and the first to complain) till the squabble was over and finding that

¹ John Taaffe, a literary bore who wrote the ‘History of the Order of St. John.’ In the notorious affair at Pisa here referred to, he behaved with too much discretion for Byron’s taste and gained the title of ‘False Taaffe.’

the Pisans took the part of the scoundrel (I need not add that he was a Pisan himself) did all he could to shuffle out of any responsibility. He—Mr. Taaffe—is under some small obligation to me—for I prevented Mr. Trelawny, a truculent Cornish Gentleman, from breaking his bones for his conduct on this occasion and I assure you it was no easy matter. I speak of facts sufficiently notorious at the time—Mr. Dawkins, the then Minister at Florence. I am touched by the bounties of Lady Jersey though I do not know how I shall be able to avail myself of them. I was sick of the "Salons" long before I left England and I have seen enough of the foreign Monde since, and before even, to acclaim with Solomon that "all is vanity and that there is nothing new under the sun." There may be something *new* to the *new*, but I am not in that predicament and I am glad of it since it leaves me without any ambition or curiosity. Siate Felice, my Cousin, and let me know that you are so and I shall be content. Come this way if you can—or will—or at any rate let me know how far you are from

'Your ever and most affectly

'N. B.'

No. 4.¹

The Greek Expedition—attack on Castlereagh—'The Liberal'—advice to a pretty woman—Webster's vagaries—invites Byron to conciliate—his debt to Byron—English Visitors—the Blessingtons and D'Orsay—Countess Guiccioli.

To Lady Hardy, Poste restante, Florence.

GENOA, May 17th, 1823.

'My dear Coz. My voyage to Greece will depend upon the Greek Committee (in England) partly and partly on the instructions which some persons now in Greece on a private mission may be pleased to send me. I am a member (lately elected) of the said Committee and my object in going up would be to do any little good in my power but as there are some pros and cons on the subject with regard to how far the intervention of strangers may be advisable, I know no more than I tell you, but shall probably hear something soon from England and Greece which may be more decisive. With regard to the late person whom you hear that I have attacked, I can only say that a bad Minister's memory is as much an object of investigation as his conduct while alive, for his measures do not die with him like a private individual's actions. He is matter of history and wherever I find a tyrant, I will mark him. I attacked him no more than I had been wont to do. As

¹ A short excerpt from this letter is printed in Moore's *Life* (No. 522).

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to "the Liberal" it was a publication set up for the advantage of a persecuted author and very worthy man but it was foolish in me to engage in it and so it has turned out, for I have hurt myself by it without doing much good to those for whose benefit it was principally intended.

'Do not defend me, my Coz, it will never do. You will only make yourself enemies and a pretty woman will always have enough without encumbering herself with the superfluities of other people. Mine are neither to be diminished nor softened but they may be overthrown and there are events which may occur less improbable than many which have happened in our time that may reverse the present state of things. "Nous verrons."

'Your Chevalier whom you do not again allude to, has not closed his career yet. He has been to Paris, ran away with one of his wife's children (by mistake it is supposed for one of his own), has been taken by the police, ran away again, been *telegraphed* to Lisle but escaped bearing away this paternal trophy of his prowess, after having broken his word to a Mr. Fawkes to whom he pledged himself that he only wanted to see the children and would restore them immediately to Lady Frances who had recourse to the Ambassador etc. etc. But this is not all. He involved me when he was at Genoa, 1st^{ly} in a correspondence with Lady F. to reconcile them. Well, he had the impudence to deny to Sir Charles Stuart having ever authorized me to address her on the subject. 2^{dly}, I endorsed two bills for him here to enable him to get away. My banker here says that they were protested by his banker and of course I have had to pay them.

'All this has somewhat stirred my meekness. I have written to England to have him arrested (if he appears there) on a bond for a thousand pounds which I lent him ten years ago with ten years interest due upon it. I am tired of helping measures with such a mauvais sujet. I remember lending him that sum on condition he did not go to the Jews. He took it, went to the Jews notwithstanding and never paid me a farthing from that time to this. I hope I shant be deemed a hard creditor in being at length provoked to teach him some articles of faith.

'I have not lately seen anyone who could give me some news of you and your letter was very àpropos as I had begun to think that you had quitted Tuscany. I have dined four or five times with our Minister, Mr. Hill, and see occasionally some passing English; among these I saw Henry Fox, Lady Holland's firstborn in second Wedlock, and I was delighted to see him again for he was always an especial favourite of mine.

'There be here and have been for some time past the Earl and Lady Blessington and a Parisian ami of the Family's (or Comte

D'Orsay), to all of whom as friends of Thos. Moore and Blue besides I have been presented and all that. The Parisian is very young and a beauty, of which last advantage he is fully aware, but he is not at all disagreeable and I should suspect that the women find him more formidable than dreadful. Miladi is the Miladi of whom Lawrence made a picture that set all London raving, as you may have seen in the papers. She is also an authoress, hath written three books and will I suppose write thirty in due course of time and tide. As they were friends of Moore's and have been civil to me I could not easily (in my usual way) escape being occasionally with them, especially as they are equestrians and I met them frequently in my rides about Genoa; but this has plunged me into a bit of dramatic trouble, for "La mia dama," Mde la Comtesse G., was seized with a furious fit of Italian jealousy and was as unreasonable and perverse as can well be imagined. God He knows she paid me the greatest compliment, for what little communication I had with this new Goddess of Discord was literally literary, and besides that, I have long come to years of discretion and would much rather fall into the sea than in Love any day of the week. Her Ladyship was extremely well guaranteed from any presumed observation of my inclination by her Parisian appendage and would only have changed for the worse which would neither have suited her or me.

'Madame Gi (who never saw her) wont allow her to be pretty and will allow her to be not young. I dared not form a judgement on the subject before a person who argues with all the insolence of four and twenty. I send you this gossip that you may laugh at it which is all that it is good for, if it is good for so much.

'I shall be delighted to see you again but it will be melancholy, should it be merely for a moment.

'Ever yours

'Most Affectly

'N. B.'

No. 5.

Love after thirty—Lady Blessington the Irish Aspasia—a real Excellency—the Guiccioli's future—Byron's portrait and present appearance—the tragedy of Lady Frances—'When we two parted'—the clue and suppressed stanza.

The Lady Hardy, Poste restante, Leghorn.

June 10th, 1823.

"Very right," my dear Cousin (or Cozen), but you see there was no danger, for I have an awful dread both of new love and

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learning and besides, to say truth, thought that I was as well off at home. I suspect that it is only over a very young man that these mature enchantments are permanent and indeed I know in one instance at least of my own experience that at entering into life those full blown beauties have the power you describe. But at present besides my long foreign liaison of five years and my being exceedingly governed and kept tight in hand, I do not know how it is, but it would be difficult for me to fall in love again with an Englishwoman of any description. Besides I have laid down a rule never to have a feeling of that kind (that is a new one) after thirty. My present attachment began before I had turned that awkward corner of existence, so that it was but just in time. Having begun, it will probably continue to the end of the chapter unless something out of the way stops it, as it does many things of that kind.

‘To return to our Irish Aspasia, I did not know that she had been Post-mistress of Cahir, but I had heard that she had been a mistress of some kind or other before she espoused the Earl of Blⁿ. Her slight acquaintance with me was of the most decorous description; the poor woman seemed deranged with ennui, entirely bored with her Lord and a little sick of her Parisian Paladin also, though why I could not perceive, for he is not only remarkably handsome but certainly clever and apparently amiable—but it was hinted that his temper was not good, in fact that he was exigent, though I saw few signs of either. I saw very little of them, especially latterly, and now they are gone. Lady Kinnaird has just gone with Lord Kin^d to England; he dined with me the day before yesterday. To-morrow I dine with our Excellence (the only one of the Diplomatsists I ever knew who really is excellent), Mr. Hill, to meet (I believe) the Marquis of Hastings who has arrived here, Heaven knows how, from India.

‘My latest news from Greece gives me reason to suppose that I shall be required to go up there and probably soon. In that case Madame Gi retires into a Convent (it is her own fancy, since I positively refused her request to accompany me *there* as you may readily suppose) or to her Father’s; but there is a difficulty about the Roman States, as her lawful Lord might have her shut up for life, it seems—till we can find our way back again or till Greece is quiet enough for me to send for her.

‘I am glad that you like her picture. Mr. West is not in fault about mine, for I was *then* what it appears, but since that time and indeed since you saw me I am very much reduced, partly by uncertain health in the Winter and partly by the rigorous abstinence necessary to preserve it. But it is so far better that it makes me more like what I used to be ten years ago—in part at least.

‘Kinnaird, who has not seen me for two years and a half, was

as much struck with the re-alteration at present as he had been with the former alteration in the fourth or fifth year since I left England. It is now the eighth, that is, the seventh is completed and three months of the eighth.

'As for your Chevalier, W.W.^r, my Coz, to be sure I heard from himself all but his [Sestovan]¹ surprise, but there is some little doubt of his accuracy. At least it is very strange that he could never prove so public a voyage of discovery.

'She, poor thing, has made a sad affair of it altogether. I had the melancholy task of prophesying as much many years ago in some lines of which the three or four first stanzas only were printed, and of course without names or allusions and with a *false* date. I send you the concluding stanza which never was printed with the others.

"Then fare thee well, Fanny,
Now doubly undone,
To prove false unto many
As faithless to one.
Thou art past all recalling
Even would I recall,
For the woman once falling
Forever must fall."

'There's morality and sentiment for you in a word's worth, but I was very tender hearted in those days. If you want to know where the lines to which the stanza belongs, *are*, they are in I-know-not-what volume but somewhere (for I have no copy); but they begin with

"When we two parted
In silence and tears," etc. etc. etc.

'So here is a treasure for you in honour of our relationship, rhymes unpublished, and a secret into the bargain which you wont keep. I have not seen your Sir Peter Teazle. I heard that he acted very well and that you looked very well but that the part was too good natured for you—the last is an addition of my own.

'I assure you that there is no coldness between me and Mr. T.² that I know of, but I never write letters and that perhaps has displeased him; I write to you because besides our relationship (though I never could make out the pedigree) you are an especial favourite.

'Ever and affectly yours
'N. B.'

¹ Every effort to elucidate this word has failed. Sestovan (? a coined adjective meaning 'of or at Sesto') is nearest to the script. Sestrian is another possible reading.
Mr. Taaffe.

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The correspondence ends here. A month later Byron sailed for Greece and within a year was dead. Lady Seaforth lived on for fifty years and died at Hampton Court in 1877. Her correspondence with Byron represents almost the last of his hours of idleness. He had little time thenceforward for drawing-room gossip, and in the last strenuous months of his life his correspondents were principally men.

One word more. The truth is great and ought to prevail, yet in Byron's case, as in scores of other cases, when truth comes in at the door romance flies out of the window. Our undying interest in Byron does him little service; the more we know of the man the less cause we have, living in these days, to admire him. Lady Seaforth preserved his letters and when, towards the end of her life, Mrs. Beecher Stowe threw her bombshell into the literary circles of London, Lady Seaforth collected the newspaper cuttings concerning this revived sensation and filed them with her Byron correspondence. But, wiser perhaps than others, she made no attempt to enter the lists, or to contribute what she knew to the search after the truth. During many of the most interesting years of her life she kept a diary, which still survives and has never yet been edited. There are careful records in these volumes of conversations with Byron on the topics touched upon in this article, and to the end she regarded the poet as an ill-used man. For the moment, her carefully guarded papers do no more than contribute the solution of a minor Byron puzzle and reveal for the first time the truth concerning one of the loveliest poems in the English language.

It is better that we should know the poem to have been inspired by Byron's attachment for Lady Frances (cynically and cold-bloodedly as he viewed it) than that we should regard Augusta Leigh as its inspiration. But better still if we had never probed its origin, but left it, in its romance and beauty, a gem among love songs, poignant and anonymous. It were well for Byron if we had obeyed the injunction of the poet Gray:

'No farther seek his merits to disclose
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose)
The bosom of his Father and his God.'

THIEVES.

THE company in the ship's bookcase was more mixed than that in the saloon. Two volumes of 'The Life of Samuel Johnson' rubbed red-leather shoulders against the sober blue sides of 'Services of Prayer for Social and Family Worship'; Sir Sidney Lee's 'Life of William Shakespeare' (slightly mildewed) happily bridged the gulf between the ritual of the latter and the bygone orthodoxy of 'Cavendish on Whist,' 24th edition, 1901. Resolutely secular by this time, the top shelf supported 'Les Misérables' without incongruity and a novel called 'Saddle and Sabre' with no more affectation than an elaborate late Victorian binding. These were the *haute bourgeoisie* of the bookcase, and the passengers of the s.s. *Janjira* had rarely disturbed them. The climate of the Kathiawar ports does not flatter Sir Sidney Lee, and Dr. Johnson labours heavily in the Persian Gulf. Cavendish scarcely survived his twenty-fourth incarnation, and Family Worship is only a tenuous memory east of Suez. It appeared that the obscure 'Saddle and Sabre' had been complimented with more distinction, courted more warmly, than any of its neighbours; for originally it had been the property of a Gunners' Mess at Kirkee, from where some robust admirer must have stolen it with the impetuous ardour encouraged by an outmoded style of fiction.

None of the passengers on this voyage of the *Janjira* looked like a book-thief. A colonel re-emerging from retirement and a subaltern who had played cricket for the Army in India against the M.C.C. seemed beyond suspicion, and a lady with iron-grey hair and a condemnatory mouth was obviously impeccable, even her occasional attacks of sea-sickness being managed with exemplary composure. There was a German, mysteriously engaged in commerce of some kind, who was naturally a possible suspect, but he read only one book on board, a heavy-looking volume called 'Germany and the Germans,' which he finished without emotion just before going on shore. The other two passengers were a ranker officer and his wife, who were much too respectable to steal; and in any case they brought their own *Taler* and *Sketch* with them, which satisfactorily filled the two days between Bombay and Karachi.

And yet there was a thief on board, for after we had left Karachi—where the colonel and the subaltern, the lady, the ranker

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and his wife and the German went ashore—it was found that one of the most prominent books in the collection had disappeared.

There was raffish company in the lower shelves: novels with challenging titles like 'The Humming Bird,' 'Proud Flesh,' and 'Peradventure,' which even the company of 'The History of the Telephone' could not wholly subdue. Flaming like scarlet between an asbestos 'Daniel Deronda' and George Macdonald's 'Sir Gibbie' there was Cabell's 'Figures of Earth.' But they escaped the thief. Even 'The Case of Richard Meynell' evaded his predatory fingers, and a massive 'Social Life in Scotland in the XVIIIth Century' sat solidly secure, its masculine bulk an evident comfort to Mrs. Humphry Ward.

Novels old and new kept their place on the ravished shelves. Only one volume had gone, and no one will ever know who took it—the lady or the German, the colonel, the subaltern, or the ranker's tired-looking wife. It was not a book which would attract everyone, for its use belonged to an ephemeral past and its weight was considerable.

The missing volume was the 1914 edition of 'Who's Who.' It had looked well on the middle shelf, a red centre from which radiated many diverse spokes of literature and advertisement; but its attraction, even to a social historian of the pre-war Georgian epoch, must have been limited, and it was almost impossible to imagine a colonel or a lady who could discipline herself in sea-sickness carrying it off. But still, it had gone.

Its loss was not immediately discovered. The passengers who had come aboard at Karachi were an American, a booster by profession and a bridge-player by nature, with a delightful wife; and a young man in the employ of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. With Radcliffe and myself, then, who were travelling together, we were just five in the saloon, in addition to the ship's officers.

The booster had travelled six hundred thousand miles in fourteen years, he told us, boosting all the way. He worked four or five hours daily correcting the proofs of an enormous catalogue of the world's chief towns, railways, steamship lines, produce, populations, and commercial possibilities. This was done on behalf of the firm he boosted and made profitable by thousands of wealthy advertisers. The current edition, which he carried with him, was much bigger than an old-fashioned family Bible.

On the second day out he asked, 'Have you got such a thing as a "Who's Who" in this ship?'

'There is a copy, but it's rather old I'm afraid,' said the Chief Officer, and went to look for it.

It was then that we discovered its loss. It had certainly been seen, and its antiquity derided, just before reaching Karachi. Six passengers, all of whom had had access to it, had landed there, and 'Who's Who' was no longer in the ship. The logical assumption—indeed the only one—was that it had been taken ashore by at least one out of the six; it was even possible that there had been a conspiracy to steal it.

The booster, who wanted to find out where Lord Inchcape lived, was disappointed. He said: 'Well, there's thieves everywhere, and I suppose we've got to put up with it. But I reckon a book-thief's the meanest kind of thief there is. He ought to be hung every time.'

His wife—her features were perfection and her American drawl was a continued caress—remarked: 'Your own book's been stolen so often, from hotels and offices and all sorts of places, hasn't it?'

'For pressing ties in?' suggested Radcliffe, considering its size and fictional appeal.

'Once it was for jacking-up a car,' she answered, and laughed deliciously.

The booster grunted. He felt the pride of authorship, and he had not travelled six hundred thousand miles that his harvest might jack-up a distressed motor-car. His loss made him sentimental, and passing easily from literature to politics he began to remember the shameful way in which President Taft had treated President Roosevelt.

'Bill Taft,' he said, 'the big fat son of a gun, played him dirty. Roosevelt went off to Africa, an' when he came back he found his party split an' himself on the floor. I'll tell you, if Roosevelt had been President in 1914 our declaration of war would have been just twenty-four hours later than yours. Yes, Sir!'

'That,' I said for consolation's sake—the booster seemed to be in genuine distress—'is pretty generally recognised in England.'

'It is, is it?' he said. 'That's recognised, is it? Well, I'm glad. Old man Roosevelt was good. He was a man. And if that big fat son of a gun hadn't crossed him there'd have been a difference in history. Well, I guess there's time for a rubber before dinner—eh?' And he sat down and beamed invitingly at the saloon from behind a bridge-table.

His wife did not play. She wrote letters and maintained a desultory conversation with her husband. 'I'm just going to write

a note to Mary Bleeker,' she said, 'so I can post her something from Baghdad.'

The booster grunted and said 'Three hearts.'

'Her brother was one of the most promising young men in Lewiston,' she explained to us. 'And then he married a widow and seemed to lose his ambition. Before that he used to sleep at the office.'

The booster explained to his partner exactly how many mistakes he had made, and dealt again with neat fingers.

At dinner he entertained the table with an account of Angkor Wat, which he had visited the previous year, and with a theory of his own to account for the disappearance of the Khmers. It was not without difficulty that the young man in the employ of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company succeeded in turning the conversation to his favourite subject of the battle of Jutland, with a pendant dissertation on the tactical errors of Admiral Beatty.

'He was too young for the job,' said the middle-aged Chief Officer.

'But he had had as much experience as older men,' said the youngish Captain.

'How old was he, anyway?' asked the booster.

Nobody could say for certain. 'If we only had that darned "Who's Who,"' sighed the booster. 'I'd like just three minutes with the son of a horse-thief who carried it off.'

'It's a curious business,' said the Captain. 'Are you sure it isn't somewhere in the ship?'

'Certain,' answered the Chief Officer. 'And just as certain that it went ashore at Karachi. I never did trust passengers farther than I could see them.'

There was a chorus of protest.

'All right,' said the Chief, grinning. 'Nothing personal, you know.'

In the morning the booster ran ten times round the wet decks, did various exercises for the sake of his figure, drank his early tea, and began the second chapter of Carlyle's 'French Revolution.'

'Now this is a book I could understand anyone stealing,' he said. 'It's a good book, and it makes you think. There's a temptation to steal a book like this. But an old "Who's Who" wouldn't keep a convict guessing.'

We rounded the ragged protruding point of Oman—gaunt rocky peaks, hiding a secret harbour; a famous old pirate roost—and entered the Persian Gulf in a thunderstorm. As darkness fell,

lightning lit up half the horizon, flapping sheets of lilac-coloured fire, veined with silver, and followed by growling thunder. The black armour of the sea was inlaid in broken patches with phosphorescence as bright as emerald.

'Can anyone tell me just what phosphorescence is?' inquired the booster.

Unfortunately nobody could, though the young man in the employ of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company considered that it was a minute animal organism of some sort.

'Living, do you mean?' asked the booster. 'No, sir. It's chemical. I reckon I've seen the same sort of thing on dead tree stumps in Oregon. But not so bright, I'm willing to admit. Well, there's time for a rubber before bed, isn't there? You're five rupees down on the last session,' he reminded Radcliffe.

By the time the *Janjira* reached Bushire 'Who's Who' was almost forgotten. A row of tiny flat-roofed houses lay far off, against a huge background of mountains in a golden haze. The sea was a vast blue meadow, silver-stippled with light, and the sun was pulling away all the western sky like a curtain of gold muslin. In the morning we lay at anchor off the bar which guards the mouth of the Shatt el Arab, the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates, and the booster considered our imminent arrival at Basra with dismay. For he was only half-way through the 'French Revolution.'

'I'll be real sorry to leave this book behind,' he said. 'It's a great work, and I wish I'd come across it before.'

The Anglo-Persian Company's young man was full of statistical information as we passed the orderly ranks of date-palms which guard the low sides of the river. 'Eighty-five per cent. of the world's date supply comes from here,' he said, and waved a hand to the endless battalions of green palms. 'Yes?' said the American, wondering. 'And what's a good tree worth in a good year?'

'Fourteen shillings. And a poorish tree will make about eight to ten shillings,' answered the young man promptly.

'And with new capital, scientific production, up-to-date marketing and capable advertising the value could probably be doubled,' suggested the booster dreamily; and surveyed without enthusiasm a trio of half-naked river Arabs drifting by in a dug-out canoe.

The young man disembarked at Muhammerah. The rest of us went on to Basra, and on the following morning we found ourselves in neighbouring compartments on the train to Baghdad. Slowly we rolled through the desert. We stood in the corridor and watched

the interminable featureless plain, the horizon disguised by thick mirages of trees and towns, galloping ridges of light that looked like charging horsemen; narrow black Arab tents and flocks of sheep and goats following their herdsman in clouds of brown dust. It was endless, and all alike. In a little while I knocked at the door of the Americans' compartment.

'We'd just settled down to read,' said the booster. 'There's nothing much more to be seen in this desert of yours once you've looked at it for a minute or so.'

'Have you read this one by Berta Ruck?' asked his wife, and showed me an aged novel on the fly-leaf of which was printed with a purple stamp 's.s. *Janjira*.'

'She says she found it in her baggage, wrapt up kind of accidentally,' remarked the booster.

'It's funny how things get mixed up when you're packing, isn't it?' she said, her eyes twinkling.

I looked at the booster's own book. It was Carlyle's 'French Revolution.' 'Well,' he said defensively, 'I reckon they charged us too dear for a short trip like that, and the food wasn't too good either. So I took this to level things up a bit. Besides, they ought to look after their books. Think how that "Who's Who" was lifted off the ship at Karachi, right under their very noses!'

I went back to look at the desert, and then turned to the compartment where I had left Radcliffe. He too was reading.

'Those Americans are extraordinary people,' I said. 'You remember how conscientiously the booster read the ship's copy of the "French Revolution"? Well, he's still reading it. He took it away with him, and he's as conscientious and enthusiastic over it as ever.'

Radcliffe grunted.

'And his wife has taken a novel of Berta Ruck's to keep Carlyle company. Only she says it was by accident that she took hers.'

Radcliffe grunted again, and turned a page.

'What are you reading?' I asked.

'"Figures of Earth,"' he answered.

I took it out of his hand and looked at the fly-leaf. There was a familiar purple stamp on it.

He grinned feebly and reached for it again. And we rolled and rattled on through the desert, past a dirty sombre-clad party of Arab horsemen—marauding Arabs, probably.

E. R. R. LINKLATER

REMINISCENCES OF A HARROW MASTER—I.

I SHALL never forget my first impression of Harrow on a perfect August day—which memory seems to say (though doubtless she is a lying jade) was more common in the past than in the present. It was long before the war and all the devastating changes of these latter years. Harrow was no town then, but only the great school in a beautiful rural setting. The train left the suburbs of London behind at Willesden, Wembley was too thinly populated to be allowed a station, and Harrow only had one because of the school: but with its graceful church spire peeping over the tops of the tall elms it was as a city set on a hill and a landmark for many miles around.

Coming out of the little station, still, as is the wont in country places, with its wooden footbridge to connect the up and down platforms, and following the road which skirted the long sloping fields that led up to the top of the hill, I remember the branches of the trees on each side of Grove Hill—for there were then no houses upon it—met overhead and formed a green canopy which cooled the summer heat, and made the steep ascent quite easy. It was all very beautiful and very memorable, now all is gone. Progress has cut down the trees, and brought the outskirts of London to the foot of the hill itself, and built houses where once the great elms interlaced their branches. The country station has given place to one of many platforms suitable for the vast suburban traffic: a large secondary girls' school now stands where was once a country house in well-wooded grounds; there is no shade from a green canopy overhead, and no welcome sound of cawing rooks. Progress is as Juggernaut in its ruthlessness, and its path is as the Appian Way flanked with the tombs of much that was great and beautiful: and those who go to Harrow for the first time to-day will gain no impression of how beautiful that part of Middlesex once was. They will climb Grove Hill, but not the Grove Hill as we knew it, where Charles the First rested and watered his horses, and watched and waited for the help from London which never came, and from which he took his last look of London as a free man: it is no longer the wooded lane up which so many of those who have made the name and fame of the great school climbed to their work and their play.

Near the top of it there are now school-houses and school buildings, necessitated by the growth of modern requirements, and in connexion with the building of Elmfield, the first school-house met with, there was the strange confirmation of an old superstition. When a fox was seen in Harrow it was said that there would surely be a fire in one of the school buildings, and this actually happened in the case of Elmfield. When the house was partially erected, about 11 o'clock one Sunday morning a fox was seen to run from it across Grove Hill. Shortly after a fire was discovered in the half-finished building: not very much damage was done, but there was the fire. Probably this was the last fox ever seen in Harrow.

I never heard that if there was a fire there must have been a fox, but only that if there was a fox there would be a fire, for later on, many years afterwards, there was a disastrous fire, one of the school-houses being entirely destroyed. It was a pathetic sight: owing to the height of the hill, the fire engines could not force the water to the top of the house, and the flames were pitiless. Though the material damage was great, no lives were lost. The fire originated about 9 o'clock in the evening when the boys were at a lecture, and as it was just two days before the end of the term, they went home earlier than the rest of the school, and were accommodated in some private houses which happened to be empty during the time their house was being rebuilt.

It is impossible to think of Harrow of nearly forty years ago without thinking of its many inadequacies—as judged by modern standards. There were not enough class-rooms to go round; some of us wandered from room to room, and many of the rooms would have been condemned without hesitation by any School Board Inspector who happened to come along. What did for a duke's son would have been regarded as impossible for the son of a tinker or a tailor now: and the rooms were hopelessly deficient in the standard cubic capacity said to be necessary, in lighting, in ventilation, and in every educational appliance. But, after all, such things and textbooks and methods of instruction are capable of unending improvement, nor do they make up the school for the highest purposes of education; the personality of the teacher makes the lasting impression, and Harrow had no deficiency there.

I have a much valued pen-and-ink sketch of my first class-room, inspired by Winston Churchill, one of the earliest pupils in it; it was the Speech room turret, and as is the way of turret rooms lit by little slits of windows and approached by a narrow winding staircase,

at the foot of which the old man who brought round the 'absence' book used to stand and shout, 'Any absent to-day? this is a torturous staircase.' In it was placed some improvised desks and benches, and there I did my best to teach elementary mathematics to some twenty boys, many of whose names are now household words. But the cold of it on a winter's morning! especially during the long seventy-five minutes' work before breakfast, and Harrow clay can be very dank and chilly in November and December; no heating was possible: the little gas jets had to be lighted by the first who entered. However, the room served its purpose, and if it was but a little thing it was all my own; and it cannot have been altogether unpleasant, no unhappy or unpleasant memories are associated with it, and many teachers have taught in worse. The craze for perfection in material surroundings may lose sight of matters of more importance; there is no need to envy the scientifically calculated ideal conditions thought necessary for the secondary schools.

My second room was better, but only a little better, because it was more in contact with the life of the school; it was high up in the old building, and had once been a box room in what was then the head-master's house. From it there was a glorious view of the country stretching far away into Buckinghamshire to the boundaries of Oxfordshire, and in the glow of the setting sun it was possible to see the Round Tower of Windsor just below the horizon, the roof of the Eton Chapel, and the haze in the Thames valley. Along three sides of the room were sloping boards which served as desks; the boys sat with their faces to the walls and their backs to the master, who had a desk in the middle of the room, with a blackboard near at hand; but how he was expected to use it I never could quite understand. In the Speech room turret the boys at least all faced the same way; here they faced three ways and all away from the master. However, after some few months, the desks were altered, and, later on, this room and an adjoining small room, by the destruction of a partition wall, were thrown into one and made a fair-sized class-room, though still not to be compared with the beautiful rooms, beautifully furnished, which are looked for in the Municipal Schools. But we did have in it two decorations on the walls, at first sight rather terrifying in their blackness: two large rubbings (and in the small low room they looked very grim and near) of John Lyon and his wife taken from the brasses in Harrow Church. Just opposite my room, and not much better,

was the head-master's, consecrated by the memory of many famous scholars and famous teachers, Vaughan and Butler and Westcott.

At the time of which I write Harrow was in other ways than its class-rooms extraordinarily mediæval; it was so bound up with tradition and had so little changed that in some aspects of its life it seemed to be out of contact with school life as a whole and a thing apart. No inspectors visited it, nor did it feel the blast of any outside criticism. Classics had the pride of place; Ovid's 'Fasti' reigned supreme in the pupil rooms; the senior mathematical master was still being paid a capitation fee for every boy who learnt mathematics, though the subject was now part of the general curriculum. The School was staffed by men of great academic distinction, most of whom had been there for many years, but not all of them were great schoolmasters, as was well known. There was one—among the ablest mathematicians of his time, long since passed away—in whose room was played an original but, fortunately, not much met with form of cricket. The game was this. The master would say to a boy 'Silence'; the boy was not silent, but for every time the word was said he scored one; if, however, a punishment was given, his innings came to an end and another in the division went in to score. On one occasion the master with some exasperation said 'Silence—I wonder how many times I have said "Silence" to you this morning.' 'Please, sir,' the boy at once replied, 'I know, seventeen times.'

The following story—told me by one of the chief actors in it—will show how independent the masters had been in the past; some remnants of that independence still remained. The master, whom I will call A., had in his early days seen two boys sitting disconsolately by the roadside, after lock-up, in the dusk of a winter's evening: he asked them what they were doing there; they replied that they were late for lock-up and Mr. B. (their house-master) would not let them in. A. went to the house and rang the bell; the door was opened by Mr. B. himself. A. said 'Two of your boys are outside and say you will not let them in.' He replied, 'The rules of the School are that boys must be in by lock-up; they were not—I will not have them now,' and slammed the door. A., at a loss and realising the impossibility of the two boys staying out all night, went to the head-master, Dr. Butler, and told his story. Dr. Butler said 'Let the boys sit in my hall; I will send a note to Mr. B.' He sent many notes. and only after some two or three hours were these boys admitted back into their House. Forty years ago such an episode could not and would not have happened; it is almost

inconceivable for any time ; still, however, the senior masters were extraordinarily independent, and the central authority, even if it legally existed, which is doubtful, could not in many ways be exercised. The Houses were almost without exception owned by the masters themselves, and this put them in a very strong position in any difference of opinion which might arise between them and the School.

Let me recall some of the masters. Edward Bowen was Head of the Modern Side, a fine scholar, a great gentleman and a most lovable personality—a poet too, to whom as the author of its famous songs Harrow owes an unpayable debt. Like all great teachers his methods were unique ; I remember him coming into my room to give out some very matter-of-fact notice to his Sixth Form, and the boys cheered him to the echo ; I have no idea why, but at least their action was unconventional. The boys in his House were devoted to him, and lived, because he willed it so, more Spartan lives than did the rest of the School ; they had no easy chairs in their rooms, nor fires in the winter terms till long after they had been begun in other Houses. In his relations with the School he was independent and unyielding ; he would not allow any of his boys to join either the Army class or the Cadet Corps ; if any wanted to go in for the Woolwich or the Sandhurst examinations they must take it—as far as he was concerned—in their stride and through the ordinary school work, or if they persisted in wishing to join the Army class they must leave his House : in this he was as adamant, and to leave his House was the same as to leave the School. In this attitude towards an examination which is designed for the average boy of seventeen and eighteen he was of course absolutely right : he was splendid, he was helping to maintain an ideal, the worth of work for its own sake, and the value of it to the national life. Like all the great educationists he saw that it was the part of his profession to open the windows of the mind to visions which were beautiful, and thus to make for the betterment of the world. There is no lower conception of school work than that it is merely designed to make boys get on in life. Army classes, with the question ‘ Will it pay ? ’ constantly before them, and with the marks value of knowledge as their standard, have done almost incalculable harm to the prestige of intellectual work and of intellectual effort ; in many cases they only pander to slackness. Bowen, in his entrenched position, was right in having nothing to do with such a class ; but it was a difficult position for an assistant master to hold

in a school in which an Army class had been established, and become recognised as part of the organisation. I never understood his objection to the Cadet Corps, as it was then called as opposed to its present more imposing name, the Officers' Training Corps, whether he thought it fostered a military spirit or whether he thought it took boys too much away from recognised school games. He was a great student of Military History and had walked over the battle-fields of the Franco-German war. In connexion with his walking there was the story of his first visit to Harrow. He was invited by Dr. Vaughan, then head-master, to come from Cambridge to see him with a view to being appointed as a master. He came, had lunch, and was saying good-bye when Vaughan said, 'How are you going back to Cambridge?' Bowen replied, 'I am going to walk.' Then Vaughan said, 'How did you come?' and Bowen answered, 'I walked.' Up to the end (he died at the age of sixty-five) he played football with his House three or four days a week; he died when taking exercise. He was bicycling with his friend, Lord Bryce, in Normandy, had pushed his bicycle to the top of some slight hill on the road, and fell dead just as the summit was reached.

But to return to him as a master. I remember an enthralling lecture which he gave in Speech-room on the battle of Sedan; it held his audience, which was no respecter of persons and could at times be unrestrainedly restless. He had maps and plans of the various military movements, but none of the usual other aids—photographs of guns, of men, and of beautiful scenery; he talked in a conversational tone of places which he knew well and of events as though he had been an actor in them. At the end, as in the absence of the head-master he was his own chairman, with a delightful twinkle, he proposed 'A vote of thanks to the lecturer for his interesting lecture,' and left the platform amid much laughter and applause.

In ways unseen but felt such men as Bowen were a difficulty to a young and progressive head-master; he had served the School uniquely for some forty years, he loved its full and happy life, and had taught and helped others to love it too; and had enormously strengthened it by his poems, which John Farmer had set to music so arresting, so tuneful, and so joyous that the melody haunts the memory long after the sounds have ceased. None hear unmoved a terminal concert in which these songs, telling of schoolboy life, its struggles, its achievements, its hopes and its promises, are sung.

He had a great name in the scholastic world—many of his pupils were men of renown in the country's service—but he was difficult, and sometimes at masters' meetings there was very real pathos in his refusal to face facts, that changes are inevitable even though they seem undesirable. There is one rule which appears to have no exception—we can all be too long in our own groove. Probably, had Bowen's ideals been striven after with greater fidelity, some of the Public Schools of to-day would not have afforded such large targets to those who scoff at their intellectual standards. His conception of a Modern Side was not that it should be the refuge for those who could not do Classics, as it soon became, but that it should be limited to some few boys—eighty, he wished—who were capable of going far in the study of modern languages, history, mathematics, and science. He regarded it as an intellectual home for the select few, and kept it so till he was overwhelmed by the rush away from the classical régime, and he resigned a position which had become unbearable. *Requiescat in pace.* Harrow was a poorer place when he was no longer there.

Another master was the Rev. F. C. Searle—Freddy Searle, as he was always affectionately called. From 1854 to 1879 there had been a master at Harrow, John Smith, whom E. D. Rendall has described in the CORNHILL. In writing a subsequent book in 1913 he says :

'A few years ago at a Harrow dinner when due honour had been rendered to the memories of School Heroes, old and new, an almost incidental reference to the name of John Smith evoked a sudden and spontaneous burst of cheering. It was a striking testimony to the deep and lasting nature of his school influence. In life it would have amazed and disconcerted him—he had never dreamed of popularity, he was outside and above it.'

Such words might be written of Freddy Searle. He was one of those rare souls gifted with a genius for moral qualities. There are some few men gifted with genius, one for knowledge, another for art, another for invention, another for discovery, and yet another for goodness, powerful to reveal its gentleness and its strength, its exquisite beauty and its ability to make smooth the rough places of the world. Among such as I have met long ago were Westcott and Newman ; it was quite impossible to enter the room in which they were without being conscious of a strange change—I can only say it was a different atmosphere, something from a purer, better,

and less material world seemed to be there ; it was as if these men were nearer to the Divine, and could bring something from the Divine light into the world. Such an one must have been John Smith ; as is possible to very few others, he could without irreverence or without giving any occasion to the scoffer bring religion into the very little things of the common task and daily round. He would say to a boy who left the door open, ' Shut the door, lad ; doors are not left open in Heaven ' ; or to another who was idle, ' Nothing to do, laddie ? Say a prayer ; you can always say a prayer ' ; or to another whom he wished to encourage to do better work, ' Try to do it better next time for my sake,' and when there was improvement, ' Yes, laddie, this is better ; but will you try and do it better next time for Christ's sake ? ' Real goodness is too sacred and too much desired by the human mind to be ever scoffed at. Freddy Searle was the John Smith of later times ; though he died some years ago he cannot yet be written about as though he were not here, but what Rendall has written of the master whom he knew and whom he loved, so others could write of Searle. Religion to him was a life, not a ceremony, and none can measure the good which such as he are privileged to do, especially in a school, where the clay is plastic for the potter's hand ; but only to a very few is given such a genius for goodness as he possessed.

I pass from him to refer briefly to two other masters—the science masters. Science was not much accounted of in the days of which I write, partly because it was still looked at askance as an intruder (the belief in the humanities as against the sciences as the motive element in education was one of the inherited tendencies from the past), and partly because it was neither strongly represented nor adequately equipped—to-day the position is entirely otherwise in every respect. The senior master was a man of encyclopædic learning, but his learning was as a valley of dry bones, and no winds came to give them life. On a complaint being made that the very ordinary school clock did not go well he undertook in all good faith to keep it ' by sidereal time,' but the stars had strange vagaries during his periods of observation, and sidereal time was most unreliable. A good clock-maker would have made the stars' work better. To a casual remark that it was a fine day, he would reply, ' Yes ; I never saw the spots on the sun larger ' ; but with all his erudition he failed to interest Harrow boys, and science made little headway as an effective school subject. The other science master was B. P. Lascelles, well known outside Harrow as the Magdalen

giant ; he was 6 feet 10½ inches high, a man of distinguished appearance who had been drawn by Du Maurier in the pages of *Punch*, in his inimitable sketches of fashionable London drawing-rooms, and couples arranged to meet for their dance by the 'tall man.' Lascelles did not find the teaching of science congenial, and resigned his mastership to become the School Librarian. Into this work he threw all his energy and enthusiasm ; boys and masters alike found in him the greatest help whenever they asked for it. He was always delighted to show the beauties and treasures of the Vaughan, and wore for some little time on his watch chain a threepenny bit which a stranger—a Greek gentleman—had given him as a tip for showing the Library. The science of the School jumped into another plane when it passed from the hands of these two masters, who had borne the burden and heat of the day in starting it, and who really had not much heart in the work which life seemed to have allotted to them. It is one thing to know and love a subject, it is quite another to know how to impart that knowledge, and if not that love, at least some interest in it, to the youthful and often unresponsive mind.

Bishop Welldon was head-master when I first went to Harrow. It would not be right for me to write much about him, for happily, vigorous and impressive, he is among us ; but there can be no offence in saying that I always thought him and still regard him as a great head-master. What makes a great head-master ? It is one of the many questions easy to ask, difficult to answer, but 'old boys' who, happily, in some things, do not feel the touch of age, know what they mean when with gratitude and affection they recall the presence, the voice, the manner of their old master whom, it may be after the lapse of many years, they regard as great. Welldon made a deep impression upon the boys and upon some, at least, of the younger masters, not so much by what he said, nor what he did, but by what he was ; he had the gift of personality ; he never came into the crowded Speech-room without absolute silence falling upon the expectant crowd ; every word he said was listened to—the School was proud of him, and felt that in him it had a worthy representative.

Mr. Fletcher, in his biography of Dr. Warre, says that 'a great schoolmaster's is not only the highest patriotic function but also the highest earthly calling.' There can be no doubt that such men as Arnold, Thring, and Prince Lee, to name but three among many, regarded their work from this high standpoint and left an enduring mark upon the generation which they helped to mould. There is

really no limit to the ever-widening influence of a great schoolmaster. Even to-day men remember and are frequently recalling how Westcott brought peace in the Durham Coal strike of 1892. It was just the effect of a good man's life upon the jarring elements of human nature which had been worked up to strife and bitterness ; and Westcott himself said that he owed everything to Prince Lee, who had been his head-master more than fifty years before. ' He was the greatest, as I believe, among the many great teachers of his time ; to him I owe the preparation for my whole life's work.' What a wonderful tribute ! Happy is the man of whom such words can be truthfully said ; there is no prize which life offers worthy to be compared to them. Mr. Fletcher's sentence is true.

The corporate life at Harrow is centred in the Chapel. In it and (less frequently) in the Speech-room the School meets as a whole. The greatest preachers of the day are glad to come that they may help to mould clay which is still pliable ; they must often feel when speaking to the average congregation that it is too late—they are addressing individuals whose characters are already formed and set. In a school, however, it is different. I think I cannot be wrong in saying that Dr. Welldon put his best into his sermons. With impressive earnestness he expressed himself in short, simple sentences, the meaning of which was at once grasped ; he would tell the stories of the lives of the boys in the Bible and draw lessons from them likely to be helpful in the needs of to-day, or would allude to important events happening in the national life. That he was attractive to an older audience was obvious from the queue that was wont to form up outside Chapel long before the door was opened on the Sunday evenings when he preached.

He had, too, the happy gift of knowing the boys and of being able to remember them : this was especially noticeable in the informal prize distributions at the end of each term ; he had always something special to say to each prize-winner, something that separated him from the rest and made him feel that he was not merely one of a crowd. That he had won the affection of the boys was clear from the striking and unpremeditated tribute which they paid to him on the last night of his head-mastership on a dark, fine December evening in 1898. Streaming out of the Speech-room where he had taken his formal leave of them, instead of dispersing to their Houses in the ordinary way, they lined up on each side of the road and cheered and cheered as alone he walked back to his House. A great popular orator who has caught the fancy of

the crowd may perhaps, during the brief spell of his popularity when he is at its summit, be the recipient of an oration more noisy, but never of one more spontaneous or more genuine. The boys waved their straw hats—a strange fantastic sight in the darkness of the dimly lighted street—and as the solitary figure passed between them he must have felt that if he had hungered for the affections of those whom he had ruled and for whose good he had worked, there was evidence here that he had attained what he desired. He left the School to go out as Bishop of Calcutta with the knowledge that it was rich in scholarship and prestige. Many of his old pupils are now in the highest positions in the service of the Church and of the State. Some of them were among those who acclaimed him on that dark December night.

C. H. P. MAYO.

(*To be continued.*)

GENTLEMEN ADVENTURERS.

Who made Britain? Gentlemen Adventurers,

Daring for the game's sake realms undreamed before;
Plank and sail to bear them, the empty seas around them,
And only danger signalling an undiscovered shore.

None backed their fortunes. They faced the risk 'unrecognised,'

And if the Don fell foul of them, came duress, stake, and rack;
While failure might mean death at home, or glory its own guerdon
(With a kiss from Gloriana perchance if they came back).

Pioneers and seekers, all the wide world over,

Leading on and fighting on, and treading out the way;
Recking but the honour, and the heart-beat of adventure,
Caring naught for aftermath of glory, or of pay.

So an Empire followed them, growing in their footsteps,

Till the seas are subject to the heart that never dies.
Hail their sons, O pioneers! beating up the storm-wind;
Gentlemen adventurers, challenging the skies!

BEATRIX BRICE.

ESDRAELON.

BY LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR GEORGE MACMUNN,
K.C.B., K.C.S.I., D.S.O.

To write of Esdraelon is to some extent to steal the thunder of George Adam Smith, since no man has described or can describe Esdraelon or Jezreel, or for the matter of that the Holy Land throughout, so picturesquely, or withal so correctly. Yet since George Adam Smith wrote, divisions of British horse have thundered over the plain, and the lion has spoken to the eagle in the very terms of the apocalypse of the 2nd Esdras. A British commander-in-chief has driven his chariots faster than those of the Syrian commander, Naaman of the leprous skin, over the Bridge of the Daughters of Jacob, and up the highway to Damascus.

Therefore also I venture, borrowing the thunder and the beauty of the descriptions, and the glory of his similes when need be, to adorn a tale of which galloping horse . . . *quadrupedante putrem sonitu* . . . the story of Bernard the Treasurer, and the recurring story of the Ephraimite at the ford o' Jordan change corners all the while. It is perhaps to be condoned, because I have visited the land since these things came to pass.

I would tell of Sir Harry Chauvel, the leader of horse, and his three divisions of mounted men, at the instance of one Lord Allenby, breaking out of Sharon into Esdraelon and Jezreel, and tearing an army to pieces thereby, with such destruction as has not been seen since Napoleon destroyed the army of Russia at Eylau and created the legend of the frozen lakes.

Let us first put the pieces on the board, for in those four years of war which we are so fast forgetting, great events came and went so fast that many remember not their sequence. How Lord Allenby broke the Turks at Gaza and Beersheba and marched by the road of Richard the Lion-heart, is too well known to need recall. But men forget the long wait that followed. How, as he prepared his next forward move, came the great German break-through in France. How his best troops were then sent to help fill the gap, leaving skeleton divisions to be reformed and regrouped from such details and oddments as could be gathered together round the Empire.

Therefore it was not till late summer of 1918 that it was possible

once more to belabour the Turk handsomely and initiate those dramatic operations which destroyed root and branch, lock, stock, and barrel, the whole Turko-German Army of 90,000 men with Marshal Liman von Sanders at their head . . . that Liman von Sanders who, if the Nuns of Nazareth had had their way, would have fallen a prisoner as well as all his hosts.

An understanding of the geography of Palestine is necessary to the following of this cavalry inroad. To most, probably, of the casual hearers of the Testaments, and to the casual student of Bible history, the flat map of the country that is usually in the back of our Bibles, with its tribal divisions, makes us think of the country as more or less of a plain rather than a greater Cumberland. The war has certainly changed that conception for many of us, but few who have not been there can realise the real geography, unless they have by them some such reminder as the raised map of the Palestine Exploration Society.

In the first place, let us remember that the Holy Land is a mountain country save only for the maritime plains and the gap of Esdraelon. Many geographers have described the land at length. Two have excelled, the writer of Genesis, who has recorded the prophecies of Jacob in geographical metaphor that holds to this day, and George Adam Smith. It is only by way of military brevity, and incidentally to the story I would tell, that I venture to do so.

I would try and present the country to the reader as some sea leviathan, or better, as some giant alligator prone on its belly, head to the south, spread on a giant mat, of which the Mediterranean is the western edge and the Jordan the eastern, the huge body representing the mass of mountains. The great head and shoulders would be the barren rocky Judaea; the middle of the back, the saddle, would be the uplands of Samaria; the hind quarters the hills of Galilee; and the stretched legs and huge scaly tail, the ridge of hills running north to Hermon and the Lebanon. Humbly would I suggest that the reader draws the leviathan asprawl, as I have indicated, and the edges of the mat. Then let him remember that the eastern edge is far lower than the western, since the Dead Sea, close below the beast's left ear as you look down on him, is 1290 feet below the level of the sea, and that Jerusalem, at the beast's wither, is 2500 feet above the Mediterranean level, and 3900 feet above the Dead Sea, which lies immediately below and is visible from the Mount of Olives.

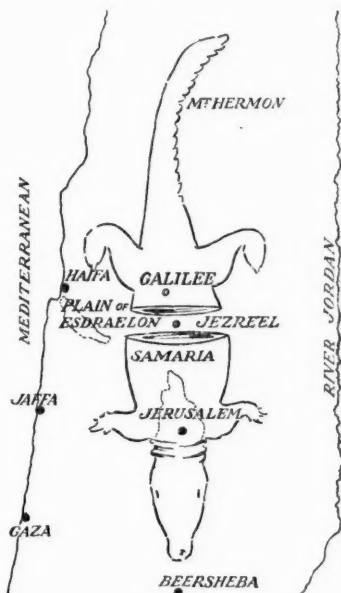
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a headsman's axe, and sever the body at the waist where it narrows near the loins. Then the great gash where the body parts . . . the great sudden gash . . . is the Plain of Esdraelon, and the Vale, or Deepening of Jezreel, that sudden rift which is so amazing, and which is best understood from the Society's raised model aforesaid. Then we have the huge body still lying on the mat,



but with the great gash that the headsman's axe has made, severing the body into two, while the mat on the right is the valley of Jordan, and the mat on the left is the Plain of Sharon and the Plain of Philistia.

The Plain of Esdraelon and the Deepening of Jezreel have their great romance in the fact that nowhere else perhaps in all the world has the clash of arms recurred so often. Here in this remarkable cleft every road of consequence in the Near East passes. From Egypt to Syria, from Asia Minor to Jerusalem, every horse and every chariot must pass over the Plain. Panipat of Delhi, Verona of the Quadrilateral, Mons of France, have no more varied story

once more to belabour the Turk handsomely and initiate those dramatic operations which destroyed root and branch, lock, stock, and barrel, the whole Turko-German Army of 90,000 men with Marshal Liman von Sanders at their head . . . that Liman von Sanders who, if the Nuns of Nazareth had had their way, would have fallen a prisoner as well as all his hosts.

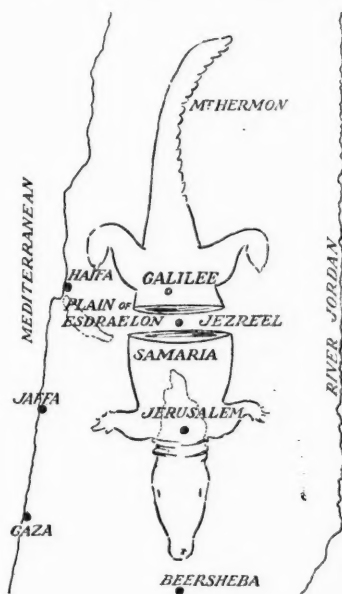
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of battle, murder, and sudden death. In the comparatively modern times of Old Testament history, it was here that Deborah and Barak destroyed the hosts of Sisera, it was here that Gideon fell on the hosts of Midian, crashing his pitchers and flashing his hidden lights. It was here that Saul and Jonathan fell before the Philistines on the slopes of Gilboa :

‘ Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon,
How fallen are the mighty and perished the weapons of war.’

It was here that Pharaoh Necho fell on Josiah, who stood in his way for a scrap of paper, when the mourning of Hadad-rimmon in the Plain of Megiddo became a proverb in Israel.

Through Esdraelon from the sea to the cities of the Decapolis passed all the wealth and pomp of Roman times, nobles a-horse or in chariot, ladies in their litters, detachments of the legion, on through Jezreel or up through Nazareth, the busy posting town, to the watering-places on Tiberias. And around lay all the ruined cities of ancient power, Beisan and Megiddo, whose silence mourns for princes dead, ruins of great centres that teemed like any city to-day, even as Hodson wrote :

‘ If you could bring her dead to life,
The soldier lad, the market wife,
Madam buying fowls from her,
Tip the butcher’s bandied cur,
Workmen carting bricks and clay
On the business of the day
Gone three thousand years ago.’

It was here again that Kléber’s squares of French infantry in their high plumed chacoës were hard pressed by Turkish horse near by Afule, till Napoleon himself came to the rescue . . . and you can see it all from Mount Gilboa, looking north, south, east, and west. The whole plain lies below before you. West the pass of Kishon by Tell Kassis, north the heights of Galilee, and the Glen of Tabor; south, Jenin and the opening of Samaria, and between, that great cavalry plain, which through all the centuries has drawn horse and chariot to the meeting. You see it all from the slopes of Gilboa, the great plain, the winding river, the ruined Crusaders’ castles, and the crimson anemone, the Rose of Sharon. Well might Omar sing :

‘ I sometimes think that never grows so red
The Rose, as where some buried Caesar bled.’

Then pondering as you look to the left you see the blue ridge out of Samaria to Carmel, and perhaps the road coming down from the Mussmuss Pass. If so, your mind will turn to the picture of the British cavalry, the 4th Division, pouring over to spread bewilderment and consternation in the rear of the Turk, headed by an Indian cavalry regiment, its bearded troopers led by a 'choice young man and a goodly.' So out into the plain, hell for leather and devil take the hindermost, riding over a Turkish battalion heading too late for the Mussmuss . . . and the green grass grew all round !

Quoting from George Adam Smith :

'You can enjoy the happiest sketch of landscape and its beauty that was ever drawn in half a dozen lines. Issachar . . . to which the most of Esdraelon fell,

"Issachar is a large limbed ass
Stretching himself beneath the sheepfold,
For he saw as resting place that it was good,
And the land that it was pleasant." (Gen. xlix. 14.)

Such exactly is Esdraelon . . . a land relaxed and sprawling up into the hills to north, south, and east, as you see a loosened ass roll and stretch his limbs any day in a Syrian village yard. To the highlander looking down on it, Esdraelon is room to stretch in and lie happy. Yet the figure of the ass goes further. The room must be paid for,

"So he bowed his shoulder to bear
And became a servant under task work."

The inheritors of the plain never enjoyed the highland independence of Manasseh and Naphtali.'

And that also is the picture that fancy paints for me, as I looked on the tracks of Chauvel's gunwheels, and 'the trench where the shrapnel buzzed and spat.' It is no part of this story to tell of Allenby's campaign as a whole, for it has been well and thoroughly told often enough. It is of the eruption out of Sharon into that plain of history that clinched the destruction of the Turk, with the centuries looking on, that I would tell. Further, except for Cassels' leading on the Tigris, it was the only major cavalry episode of the war, and it is largely due to the object lesson thus offered,

that cavalry still remain among the forces of the Crown, despite the rivalry of tank and 'plane and armoured car. Further, it may also fairly claim to be the greatest cavalry episode of all time.

And it happened in this wise. From February to September 1918, Allenby's army held a front from close to Jordan by Jericho, to Jaffa by the sea, across the mountains of Judaea and over the Plain of Sharon, awaiting the hour of its readiness. Right across the shoulders of the leviathan aforesaid lay the British line from the edge of the mat on the east to the edge of the mat on the west, by hill and by dale. And over against Mount Ephraim lay also the Turkish line, cheek by jowl, from one edge of the mat to the other. So the British held Judaea and the House of Togomar held Samaria.

Just when, after the first occupation of Jerusalem and the close of the first phase of the campaign, everything was getting ready for the next, came the hard halt necessitated by the urgent needs of France. But by September, after the long period of waiting, the time to act had arrived. General Allenby had decided to attack in force by the coast, and break a hole, to pour the cavalry through, an immense force of three divisions, and to ride over the whole of the Turkish communications, a dream of every cavalry leader since cavalry came into being. It must always spell ruin when feasible, and especially in these days of highly equipped ammunition-spending armies. With the cavalry in their rear, the Turkish armies in front of Allenby could but crumble. The divisions on Mount Ephraim, thus eviscerated, were to be crushed and driven north on to the lances of the cavalry. It was a magnificent military conception, yet simple withal as great plans must be. The scheme suited the terrain and the terrain fitted the scheme. North of the Samarian upland lay the great plain as described, lonely for the sound of galloping horse. Away from the hills of Samaria runs a long spur north-west to Mount Carmel, its extremity on the sea-coast overlooking the port of Haifa. Across this spur out of Sharon run two passes, one the Mussmuss to Lejjun, the other, more westward, to Abu Shulemon, both famous in the military annals of the ages.

The British plan is easy to understand. Their line, running as it did from Jordan to the sea, was to be thinned along its course and thickened on the left, by the divisions of infantry which were to break the Turkish line near the coast, and the cavalry who were to gallop through the rent, and overturn the Turkish rear. The

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problem was to carry out the thinning and to concentrate on the left, without the enemy obtaining an inkling. Such movements have always been hard, but in these days of Paul Pry the airman, they are far harder. The mounted troops, who had been months in the Jordan valley were to pass to the left without the move becoming known to the enemy. But how? Camouflage and night march must be the order of the day. Tents were left standing, an old device. Dummy horses were made of four sticks and a horse blanket with tail of straw to represent rows and rows of war-horses, and to throw a war-horse's shadow. The authorities believed that this imposed on the enemy airman. The wags have it that these airmen dropped notes to inquire 'Why don't your horses flick their tails and go to water?' But the proof lies in the result. A day before the start, a Turkish intelligence map showed the disposition unchanged in the British lines, 'all quiet on the Poto-mac.' At any rate the British succeeded in massing three cavalry divisions, the 4th and 5th Cavalry, and the Australian Mounted Divisions, and the 3rd, 7th, 60th, and 75th Infantry Divisions, unknown to the enemy on the coast about the River Aujah and the Plain of Sharon. Luckily in Sharon and round Jaffa and along the coast many orange and palm groves allowed the assembling troops to conceal themselves by day and the guns to dream dew-laden in the gun parks. And all the while the opposing planes chased each other, and the British endeavoured to down any prying Turks. And the planes flew up and down the Holy Land far faster than the chariots of Syria, along the Jordan Valley and away east also by the Tigris and Euphrates.

A new thing, yet one perhaps of which the Prophet Ezekiel had some vision, interpret he never so hazily. It will be remembered how Ezekiel, that gloomy dean of Judah, preached and prophesied by those great rivers, how Israel lay captive about Nineveh and the river Chebar or Habur, which men to this day call Khabur, and Judah lay north and south by Babylon. And he saw a vision, and described what he saw blurred by the mists of the future (Ezekiel i.) . . . something rushing up and down the Euphrates where the British planes were rushing twice a thousand, once five hundred years later.

'And every one had four wings . . . and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass . . . and they had the hands of a man under the wings on the four sides, and the wings were joined one to another, and they turned not when they went, and they

went straight forward, and their look was as it were a wheel within a wheel . . . and when the living creatures went the wings went by them . . . and the wheels were lifted up over against them, and when those went these went, and when those stood these stood, and when they were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them . . . I heard also the noise of the wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noise of wheels over against them, and a noise of great rushings.'

After which who can say that aeroplanes over against Chebar or Tel Abib, or the Jordan Valley, are a new thing or unforetold as clearly as a good many other things?

By September 18th everyone was in his place, on the 19th the infantry divisions were to attack, and break the Turkish line on the Plain of Sharon. Everything happened according to plan, the division broke through and slowly wheeled inland to roll up the Turkish line and envelop their immediate rear. The cavalry, which had orders to sit down and ride and pay no attention to what was passing on their right, carried out their orders implicitly as soon as the word came to them that the road was clear. Sharon re-echoed to their horse-hoofs and the rattle of their horsed artillery. The cavalry force was still known by the name that had been so famous in Sinai and the plains of Beersheba, the Desert Mounted Corps, and the Dominion soldier, Sir Harry Chauvel, still commanded, a man with something of the spirit of Cromwell's Ironsides. By noon Sir Harry had led his Desert Mounted Corps, closed up by divisions and moving fast, eighteen miles into the coastal plain.

It is recorded that the commander of the Eighth Turkish Army, whose headquarters were well behind the line at Tulkeram, and who had not yet agitated himself with the news of enemy activity at the front, was thinking of putting his feet up after his elevens, as represented by a cup of coffee. Happening to look from his window, he saw a heavy cloud of dust. Sharply to a staff officer: 'What's that dust away in Sharon?' 'Oh,' said the staff officer, also thinking of a rest, 'must be some of our transport.'

'Transport be blowed! Here, give me my glasses. . . . It is cavalry, and a d—d lot of cavalry, British at that. Here, call up my motor car.' After which that Army Headquarters ceased to function for the duration of the war.

After travelling some eighteen miles the Desert Mounted Corps halted unmolested for a brief rest, and then away to march

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all through the night. At Ez Zarghanieh the 5th Cavalry Division turned north-east and headed for Jarak, entering the Plain of Esdraelon at Abu Shushe in the early morning, in pursuit of its mission to seize Nazareth and Afule on the Deraa-Haifa railway in the centre of the plain. The 4th Division turned north-east at Khan Es Sumrah, and made for the Mussmuss Pass. At dawn the fun began. As has been recorded, the Turks, suddenly anxious for the Mussmuss, had sent a battalion from Afule, of which only its advanced guard had been in time and had been ridden over. The 2nd Lancers of the Indian cavalry, leading, met the battalion and rode straight over it, killing 46 with the lance and capturing 470.

Of the 5th Division, the 13th Brigade reached Nazareth at half-past five in the morning, capturing 2000 prisoners and the Yilderim headquarters of Marshal Liman von Sanders, the German Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish Army. The Marshal himself made off in his night attire from his house above the town, returning however a little later to get his papers, which he found it safe to do. To this day two old nuns tell the story of how they eagerly tried to tell a young British officer that the Marshal was still in his house, and how the lad, who was weak in French could only pat them on the arm and say 'Presently ! presently !' thinking they were making some petition. Whether that be true or no, the German Marshal escaped by the skin of his teeth.

The 14th Cavalry Brigade had already occupied Afule, when the 4th Division marched in from Lejjun and passed on to carry out their orders to occupy Beisan, which it did by half-past four in the afternoon, having covered 80 miles in 34 hours. From Beisan General Barrow sent the 19th Lancers to secure the bridge over the Jordan known as Jisr Mejamie. This action completely closed the whole of the rear of the Seventh and Eighth Turkish Armies who were opposed to Allenby far south in Samaria. While his divisions were carrying out their missions, General Chauvel had brought up his own headquarters to Lejjun and was in constant touch with the various parts of his force. Of the Australian Mounted Division two brigades had been detached from their division to work with the infantry divisions, but the division itself, with the 3rd and 4th Light Horse Brigades, who were moving in reserve, was now directed on Jenin, where the road from Samaria enters the plain, which was captured at half-past five in the evening, thus closing another exit to the Turks in front. The Turkish

railway communications, their motor roads, their command headquarters and the Afule aerodrome were all in British hands, and the Turkish divisions of four army corps were now cut from their base and could only recover themselves by destroying the cavalry in their rear. But to turn on the cavalry and rend them, meant time to locate them and time to plan their destruction. But, alas, on the front were those ravening wolves, the divisions of Allenby, attacking, gripping, pursuing, the moment a man turned his back, so that measures against the cavalry could not even be concerted; besides, their General Headquarters, their *haute direction*, had gone west.

So there ensued a débâcle, for all lines of retreat were closed save only the tracks to the Jordan and one bridge that led nowhere in particular, the Jisr el Damieh. The 5th Australian Light Horse Brigade and some French Cavalry added still more to the confusion and uproar by entering Nablus, on the main road to Esdraelon. All organised resistance ceased; confusion worse confounded, British long-range shell, burning camps, and, worse than all, the relentless aeroplane. Huge columns of artillery and transport essayed to move to the Jordan and the Jisr el Damieh by way of Nablus and the Wadi Farah. Some miles down the Wadi the road passes through a gorge, and here it was that the airmen fell on the head, blocking the road with guns and lorries, and then flew up and down the long jam of vehicles pouring death and destruction. Such vehicles as could, turned off along a track to Beisan with no better results, and the vast destruction spread. On one five-mile stretch of road alone 87 guns, 55 lorries, and 842 other vehicles were abandoned. For days the marching divisions from the front, and the cavalry in rear were collecting their prisoners. The Australian division between Tulkeram, Jenin, and Nablus had been particularly successful, the determination of their attack bringing a swift harvest. They mopped up over 8000 prisoners, with many high officers and a good many Germans, and drove the retreating Turks into the narrow roads to the Jordan. The 4th Cavalry Division at Beisan was equally overwhelmed with its captures. The brigades of the 15th Division had been equally successful in capturing Haifa and Acre and the garrisons there, the Indian Imperial Service Cavalry making a clinching charge at the gorge leading to Haifa, many guns and some thousands of prisoners being here added to the bag.

Nor was any way of escape to be left on the side of Jordan, for

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General Chaytor's Force with which were two Australian and the New Zealand Mounted Brigades, moving parallel to the main advance, soon closed the Jisr el Damieh, where a disintegrated lot of prisoners were taken, and the fords of the Jordan.

The tale has now been told so far as it relates to the Legend of Esdraelon. The galloping masses of cavalry had done their worst, and it may be said that not a man of the Seventh and Eighth Turkish Armies escaped. They had fallen between the upper and the nether millstone of an exceeding fine mill. The Fourth Turkish Army in Transjordan was soon to share the same fate. And then the victorious mounted troops and our Arab Allies were to sweep on to Damascus and Aleppo. Some details, chiefly German and Austrian, put up a determined forlorn fight at Semakh at the foot of the Sea of Galilee, and were as determinedly overturned by Australian mounted troops . . . one of those unnecessary fights where brave men destroy each other for no purpose. It was the end of resistance anywhere in Israel. The mounted troops then divided, some to cross Jordan by the Jisr Mejamie, and meet the Arab Army, others on to Damascus through Nazareth and past Cana of Galilee and the Horns of Hattin down to the shores of Tiberias and then on to the Bridge of the Daughters of Jacob and out over Jordan into Syria. The pursuit and destruction was not to end till Aleppo, that began in that break-out of Sharon. Between September 19 and October 26, besides great destruction of life, 75,000 prisoners and 360 guns had been captured, with all the material and armament of three Turkish armies; 200 officers and 3500 other ranks were Germans of the 'Yilderim' army, that had come to reinforce and stiffen the Turks. And it all came from that outpouring of horses out of Sharon into the Plain of Esdraelon and the Deepening of Jezreel.

Stories and yarns of interest there are many, and one is especially worth repeating here, since it deals with that continual recurrence and repetition of happenings which is one of the great charms of the study of history. It runs thus. There were many Syrians and Arabs in the Turkish conscript ranks. Some of the fords of Jordan in its upper course were guarded by parties of our Arab Allies. Straggling refugees from the broken Turkish regiments were endeavouring to escape over Jordan. They would represent that they were Syrian or Arab soldiers trying to escape to their homes. The test was a simple one, an ancient test, propounded many hundred years earlier in the same place for the same purpose

and to test a similar plea. The Arabs demanded that they should pronounce 'Bossul,' which is Arabic for 'onion,' spelt and written with the Arabic 's,' which no Turk can pronounce.

Said the Arab piquets, 'Say now "Bossul,"' and they said 'Bozzul,' for they could not make to say it right. And many Turks were slain that day at the fords of Jordan! There is no new thing under the sun, since passed the surge and thunder of the Odyssey.

GLENCOE.

DEEP is the glen and dark the cliffs

Where Cona through the wild goes sweeping ;

Darkest of all since time began

The treachery of clan to clan

That made this glen the Glen of Weeping.

None knows unmoved these mountain heights,

Immortal grief with splendour sealing ;

The stony climb a pilgrims' way,

Where free the airs of Nature play

Round labouring souls, austere and healing.

But hurrying generations call ;

Man betrays Nature now, as duty :

Speedways, for pilgrims' way, may wreak

Destruction on the joys they seek,

And gash by rule the face of beauty.

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SOME THACKERAY ORIGINALS.

BY P. R. KRISHNASWAMI, M.A.

LECTURER IN ENGLISH, GOVERNMENT COLLEGE, KUMBAKONAM
(SOUTH INDIA).

II.

JAMES BINNIE.

If Thackeray's choice of Anglo-Indian characters was made with a due sense of the most prominent representatives of the day, and if Colonel Newcome stood in some measure for Sir Thomas Munro, it will not be difficult to suppose that James Binnie, whom Thackeray is said to have told Professor Masson that he took directly from the life, was Mountstuart Elphinstone, a second member of the distinguished trio of the Golden Age of the East India Company. Colonel Newcome and Binnie are in some ways a study in contrast. Newcome's affections are ardent, simple, and unrestrained. Binnie is a shrewd and jovial person with a keen sense of humour. He is far more learned than Newcome, and, as a bachelor, he has a detached interest in life.

Binnie, the Colonel's chum, with whom he shared lodgings, is introduced in the fifth chapter of the novel. He loves good jokes and utters not a few. He speaks playfully about many secrets of the Colonel's and is described as the 'sly Mr. Binnie,' or 'that wicked Mr. Binnie.' He is a jolly young bachelor of two or three and forty, who, having spent half of his life in Bengal, is bent on enjoying the remainder in Britain or in Europe. He conducts himself in London without the least eccentricity. He is a North Briton, his father having been a Writer to the Signet in Edinburgh, who procured his son a writership in the East India Company. Binnie has his retiring pension, and, besides, has saved half his allowances ever since he had been in India. He is a man of great reading, no small ability, considerable accomplishments, excellent good sense and good humour. The ostentatious said he was a screw; but he gave away more money than far more extravagant people. He is a disciple of David Hume (whom he admired more than any other mortal). The serious denounced him as a man of dangerous principles. When Binnie and the

Colonel get to discuss the capacities of young Clive, the former remarks, 'He has wit and conscientiousness, so you mustn't think of making a clergyman of him.' When the Colonel accuses him of sneering at the cloth, Binnie replies, 'When I think that but for my appointment in India, I should have been a luminary of the faith and a pillar of the church! grappling with the ghostly enemy in the pulpit, and giving out the psalm. Oh, sir, what a loss Scottish Divinity has had in James Binnie!' When questioned by the fond father about Clive's classical knowledge, Binnie says that he knows as much as Binnie himself at eighteen, and it amounted to exactly nothing. Colonel Newcome is surprised, for Binnie had been known to be the best scholar in all India! We learn that Binnie had walked the hospitals of Edinburgh before getting his civil appointment in India. In a later chapter we are told about Binnie's pursuits in London, of which he never lacked. He was connected with all the learned societies. Though he talked year after year of going to visit his relations in Scotland, the months and seasons passed away, and his feet still beat the London pavement. Then an accident occurs: Binnie has a fall, riding the Colonel's horse, and wrenches his leg. He was no more used to riding, we learn, than the late Mr. Gibbon, whose person James's somewhat resembled and of whose philosophy our Scottish friend was an admiring scholar. He is also in the habit of carrying on arguments with Mr. Honeyman over their claret, and brings down the famous fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of the 'Decline and Fall' upon him, and quite gets the better of the clergyman. He believes that almost all parsons have as much belief as the Roman augurs in their ceremonies. Then his sister comes to Binnie, but he makes sarcastic remarks to his friends about her. Mrs. Mackenzie, the sister, gives a ludicrous account of her mother's home in the north. The Colonel is pleased to see Binnie and his sister reconciled to each other, as the late Captain Mackenzie's extravagance had been the cause of a rupture between them, Binnie having helped the prodigal captain repeatedly. Of Binnie's death we have the account that he met it like a philosopher. He rejected rather testily the consolations of the clergyman, and uttered opinions which scandalised him.

The detail of Binnie having walked the hospitals of Edinburgh before going to India is very likely borrowed from the story of John Leyden, who went to Madras in 1800, after qualifying himself at Edinburgh in medicine, though he was not able to get a degree;

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he rose to be a judge at Calcutta, but died in the East, searching for manuscripts in an underground chamber in the Malay Peninsula.

Mountstuart Elphinstone retired as Governor of Bombay in 1827, and went home in 1829. He was then fifty years old, but he had thirty years more to live, and he rejected repeated offers of high office during that time. Colebrook informs us that Elphinstone was from boyhood fired by the noblest ideals. He despised mercantile occupations as incompatible with noble ideals. He had stated that 'he should have been a frere if he could not be a knight.' This explains how Binnie should have joined the Church, if he had not gone to India. According to Colebrook, Elphinstone was fond of fun from his boyhood. As a young man he had been full of observation and mischief. When Elphinstone left for India, his sisters had no high opinion of him, and a correspondent from India, who bore testimony to Elphinstone's creditable life, writes of being 'pleasantly surprised from what his sisters said.'

While in India, Elphinstone and Munro had great mutual regard, and consulted each other on many matters of administration. Elphinstone now and again showed that mixed pity and admiration for Munro which Binnie had for Colonel Newcome.

If Binnie retired from the Indian service when he was forty-two or forty-three years old, Elphinstone had contemplated retirement at that age, though actually he retired five or six years later. The following is from Cotton's 'Elphinstone':

' . . . We have allusions to a hope of returning home overland, and a tour through Greece on the way, which was not to be realised for twelve years longer. Elphinstone calculated that five years' service was yet required before he could retire on £1,500 a year, and then he would be 42 years of age . . . too old to set up a wife and family, and likewise too old to mix in society, so as to be able to get on without them.'

As Binnie is said to have been attached to Hume, Elphinstone was an ardent Benthamite. The ascribing of 'dangerous principles' to Binnie has obviously an interesting story underlying it. At the end of a warm appreciation of Elphinstone as a man and as an administrator, Reginald Heber writes:

'A charge has been brought against Mr. Elphinstone by the indiscreet zeal of an amiable but not well-judging man, the "field officer of cavalry," who published his Indian travels, that he is devoid of religion and blinded to all spiritual truth. I can

only say that I saw no reason to think so. On the contrary, after this character which I had read of him, I was most agreeably surprised to find that his conduct and conversation, so far as I could learn, had been always moral and decorous; that he was regular in his attendance on public worship and not only well informed on religious topics but well pleased and forward to discuss them; that his views appeared to me on all essential subjects doctrinally correct, and his feelings serious and reverential; and that he was not only inclined to do, but actually did, more for the encouragement of Christianity and the suppression or diminution of suttee than any other Indian governor has ventured on. . . .¹

In spite of Heber's eager defence of Elphinstone's religious feelings, the article by H. G. Keene in the 'Dictionary of National Biography' records Elphinstone's coolness and cynical outlook in regard to religion, confirming the picture by Thackeray of Binnie's scepticism which subscribed to the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters in Gibbon. Keene writes:

'Elphinstone was apparently quite devoid of those ardent feelings which have inspired so many Indian heroes. In one of his later journals he makes his one allusion to religion; it is an encomium on Pope's "Universal Prayer." His attitude through life was rather that of an ancient philosopher.'

Another interesting commentary on Binnie's heretical beliefs is to be found in the following comment on Elphinstone:

'If Elphinstone had lived in the Middle Ages, he would at one time of his life have been imprisoned like Roger Bacon, or burned for heresy or witchcraft. There was something *eerie* about him, what the world or the *vulgus* of it considers uncanny. Once he lived a gloomy and solitary life. Of women he seldom or never speaks. . . .'²

Both Colonel Newcome and Binnie were keenly alive to their own isolation in London society, and that sense drove them to keep lodgings together, though each had his own separate circle of relations in the country. Elphinstone's feeling of strangeness on returning to England is clearly recorded. He prefixes to his Journal a quotation from the *Odyssey*: 'I said I would return

¹ From the fairly numerous references traced in these pages to passages in Heber's *Indian Journal*, it will be easy to realise adequately the fervent admiration which Thackeray cherished for Heber, when he gave expression to the praise contained in his lecture on George IV.

² *Bombay and West of India*, by Douglas, vol. ii. p. 49.

home after (30) years, after enduring many trials and losing all my companions, a stranger to all.' Elsewhere he remarks, 'Your nearest friends and relatives are whirled away, each in his own vortex, and only now and then by chance come in contact with you.'

Elphinstone lived at the Albany till 1847. He was a confirmed invalid, dependent on relations and friends who visited him. We may remember here Mrs. Mackenzie's visit to Binnie, though we need not seek an analogue to the fierce character of the Campaigner. At the same time we cannot overrate the value of the smallest hint in actual life which a novelist would gladly catch at and develop according to his fancy and abilities.

Considering the many years spent by Elphinstone in London after his retirement in 1827, it is reasonable to think that Thackeray should have had many opportunities of learning a good deal about him, if not of knowing him personally. We are also to note that the novelist's father was presumably a good friend of Elphinstone's, because we have on record in the *Calcutta Gazette* (1807) that he and Elphinstone and two other civilians gave a masqued ball of peculiar splendour.¹

Visiting Calcutta on leave, when he was Resident at Nagpur, Elphinstone was delighted with the company of the members of the fair sex. He records in his Journal: 'Such lots of women, and laughing, and philandering that I was in heaven.' A sentence from 'The Newcomes' will be apposite here: 'It is known that there is no part of the world where ladies are more fascinating than in British India.'

The picture of Binnie suggests another prominent figure of the time, whom Thackeray knew well. Macaulay lived, like Elphinstone, at the Albany. He was a bachelor too, and in appearance not unlike Binnie: 'a short manly figure, marvellously upright, with a broad neckcloth, and one hand in his waistcoat pocket.'² Macaulay had been in India for three years as member of the Governor-General's Council. He had calculated on saving exactly half of his allowances in India (as Binnie did), and actually saved more. Thackeray mentions in his sketch of Macaulay that he was known to have given away in charity a fourth part of what he earned. He was then undoubtedly the most learned man in all India, as Binnie's reputation signified. Like Binnie, Macaulay

¹ Quoted in Hunter's *Thackerays in India*.

² Trevelyan's *Macaulay*.

could not ride a horse: 'Macaulay was utterly destitute of bodily accomplishments . . . he seldom crossed a saddle, and never willingly. When in attendance at Windsor as a Cabinet Minister, he was informed that a horse was at his disposal. "If Her Majesty wishes to see me ride," he said, "she must order out an elephant."'

Like Binnie, whom Colonel Newcome describes to be a mere child (in the inability to look after his domestic affairs), Macaulay was very much dependent on his sisters for the comforts and conduct of domestic life. Like Binnie, Macaulay was frugal and at the same time generous. Like the Captain Mackenzie, numerous prodigals must have drawn on Macaulay's charity, arousing his disgust sometimes. Like Binnie, Macaulay looked to his earnings solely to provide for his sisters and their families. Deeply affectionate as Macaulay was to his sisters, he would chaff them with great liberty, as when he told them once: 'Yes, here I am, walking with two unidea'd girls.'¹

If it is not thought too ingenious, the suggestion may also be made here that Macaulay's continual postponement of a visit to Edinburgh, partly because of unwillingness to face his parliamentary electors, is parallel to the visit to Scotland which Binnie perpetually planned and put off.

Binnie, then, is a composite picture based partly on Elphinstone and partly on Macaulay. It is worthy of note that Thackeray devoted one of his 'Roundabout Papers' to Macaulay. When Thackeray describes the Clapham atmosphere in the opening pages of 'The Newcomes' he seems to reflect in some measure on the surroundings amidst which Macaulay grew up. Trevelyan refers in his *Life* to Thackeray's picture of the severe religious character of the place, and remarks on the novelist's exaggeration of it.

¹ Trevelyan's *Macaulay*, p. 87.

(To be continued.)

COLONEL ASPINALL'S MASTERPIECE.

COLONEL ASPINALL and the collection of pictures for which he was celebrated have received such a fitting amount of attention in the obituary columns that I am the more surprised that there has so far been no mention of what surely was the most extraordinary story connected with his name. Perhaps the writers thought it tactless to refer to it, but I at any rate can see no reason for their reticence after this lapse of time, when everyone concerned is now dead. The Colonel was indeed the last survivor of the informal 'fine arts committee' of the old Dover Club, and now the club itself is to be pulled down, and I, who was at best only a privileged hanger-on, am alone left as a kind of inferior Boswell to tell the tale.

The narrative would indeed need to be Boswellian, for the Colonel towered above his companions as much as the great lexicographer did above his own. I do not say that he was a better critic than Dr. Ledwell, though he was as good, but his knowledge of the technique of the subject, his facility of expression, and his vast erudition made it impossible to argue with him—and also, while we were mere amateur critics, he was a collector.

Indeed, after he left the service collecting was his only hobby, and his only extravagance, unless one is to count his wine and his cigars. For the sake of his collection he kept up a vast house in Bayswater, which gradually became crammed with pictures. When one had the fortune to dine with him there, one would generally notice two or three new ones on the walls; and if one asked what had happened to their predecessors he would answer nonchalantly, 'Oh, that! I put that upstairs to make room for this one'; there seemed an indefinite number of rooms to hang them in, for nothing ever was allowed to leave the house—and quite rightly, for even those deposed from the places of honour were masterpieces. Some indeed of the Colonel's new acquisitions never even started in the front part of the house, and late in the evening the privileged visitor would be led off up obscure stairs to see what the Colonel had bought in Toledo or Bournemouth or wherever it was. How the servants put up with it I don't know. I suppose they regarded it as the one eccentricity of an otherwise ideal master. The value of the contents of that house will only be known—well,

I suppose it will be known in about six weeks' time now, for I hear that his executors have decided to put the whole lot up for sale at Christie's. I will not risk naming any figure, but I dare say it will surprise the outside world, even in these days of high prices.

It may be asked how Aspinall came to afford such a collection, for though he had a considerable income and no expenses he was by no means fabulously rich. The answer is that besides being a critic he had in him no little of the art-dealer. It was no good offering him fancy pictures at fancy figures. Sometimes he bought at a fair price in open market, sometimes he made bargains and discoveries, but he would have laughed at the thought of buying like an American millionaire. If the Colonel went 'travelling on the Continent,' if he disappeared for a few days' mysterious 'shooting,' he was bound to bring back something worth having. There were some good stories about, regarding how he acquired some of his pictures—and that reminds me that I have been digressing from the story I set out to tell.

It concerns as long ago as October 1896, and that, I need not remind those of my readers who take an interest in pictures, was the month of the mysterious disappearance of the Botticelli 'Palatine Madonna,' till then in the National Gallery. Of course we had our own theories to account for the mystery, though I doubt whether they were more intelligent than those which appeared in the papers. After all, we were art critics, so far as we were anything, and not crime experts.

Well, about that time Peter Singleton had an invitation to dine with the Colonel at his house. Dinner with the Colonel was always a delight; the wines were admirable, so I understand were the cigars (I am a non-smoker), the food was excellent, and the Colonel always the best of company, even if we were not interested in art (though in that case one's chances of being invited were not great). Aspinall, it should be mentioned, never held dinner-parties: he invited his friends one at a time, and when he felt need of more company he stayed down at the club.

About ten o'clock Peter happened to ask Aspinall whether he had picked up anything special lately.

'Those bullfinches by the fireplace; you haven't seen them before. I got that in Exeter.'

'I've been looking at that. It's not by Fabritius. But very like him.'

'No. It wasn't even sold as one. Quite pleasant, though. It isn't stopping there. But it just happened to fit that space.'

(The Colonel always affected to regard the walls as the primary consideration.)

'Anything else?'

Aspinall did not answer for a moment or two, then he asked, 'Can you keep a secret?'

'I dare say.'

'Well, take another cigar,' and the Colonel led the way up at least three flights of stairs, into what was obviously a maid's bedroom.

'These people appreciate fires in their rooms awfully,' he said. 'I don't know if they think it's really done for their benefit. But it's most important to keep the proper temperature. Some of the best pictures in the world were ruined by cold.'

With a spill from the fire he lighted the gas, and swung the bracket round. Before him Singleton saw the 'Palatine Madonna.'

'My God!' he exclaimed.

The Colonel stood on one side, puffing his cigar, with the air of a man showing off a new discovery.

'Yes, I think it looks well. I've just hung it there. It never was in a proper light before. Funny a picture looking so well by gaslight. I don't think much of that picture by daylight.'

'Do you think it's a real Botticelli?' asked the Colonel as they went downstairs.

'Surely.'

The Colonel shook his head. 'I'll show you my idea of a Botticelli.' He led his guest into the bathroom. 'St. Severinus, I think—a rare saint. That's better, isn't it?'

Singleton was still too dazed to notice, or indeed to think of anything but the lost Madonna. He just managed to stammer out, 'Oh yes; where did you get it?'

'Carlisle. That was a real bargain. I must tell you the story of that some time. A good story, I like to think. But I'll keep it till I get the old lady's letters back.'

And he led the way downstairs and poured out two glasses of sherry.

.

That at least was the story Singleton told to the three of us a few days later at the club. Rather indiscreet of him, I thought; but I suppose it was late in the evening. Of course, it must have been, or Arthur Charles could not have been there, for he was acting in something or other at the Haymarket.

'You must have dreamt it, Peter,' said Ledwell. 'How often have I told you to give up brandy?'

'Are you sure it was the same picture?' asked Charles.

'Quite; at least, I should think so. I don't think I could mistake it. Just the same seven stars, and the lamb in the corner, and that bit of sea which I always said had not been properly finished.'

I turned to a book of National Gallery pictures, which happened to be on the table by me. The coincidence of details seemed to settle the matter.

'Of course,' said Singleton, 'if it was a copy——'

But Ledwell shook his head. We all knew quite well that Aspinall did not keep copies.

Just at that moment he came in. He must have seen in a moment that we were talking about him. He rang the bell and ordered half a pint of sherry. The Colonel was a great sherry drinker. Ledwell took the opportunity to ask for another whisky and soda, for those were the spacious days when men could have drinks at sensible hours.

Singleton said good-night and went out in obvious confusion.

'What was he saying about me?' asked the Colonel.

'Oh, Singleton,' answered Sir Arthur, with a complete appearance of indifference; he was a wonderful actor, both on or off the stage. 'He was just going to tell us something amusing about you, I believe; and then you come in and frighten him away. No, I'm afraid we haven't been talking of anything so interesting as you.'

'No,' said Ledwell, attempting to play his part in the bluff and failing.

'As a matter of fact,' Charles went on unconcernedly, 'we were still carrying on the old argument about the Madonna, without getting any further, of course. I think Ledwell still holds the Dean's theory about it being a Protestant fanatic, and Chambers will say it's just been left about in the cellars somewhere—which he knows is bosh—and Singleton has got some cock-and-bull theory that it's fallen into the hands of some eccentric collector, who keeps it shut away in a back passage, where no one can see it but himself.'

'Oh, eccentric,' said the Colonel, and he finished a glass of sherry. 'One can explain anything by eccentricity. By the way, I suppose I've told you the marvellous history of Cesare Borgia and the picture of Plato and Ganymede—a manifestly untrue story, but it comes in quite a respectable commentary on the *Phaedrus*?'

'No.'

'Well, I will, in spite of the lateness of the hour.'

And tell it he did, and a very good story it was too.

Next day the Colonel drifted into the club. I happened to be the only one of his particular friends there.

'Hullo, Chambers,' he said. 'I'm just off for a few days' shooting in Cornwall. You must dine with me when I come back.'

'Thanks very much.'

'By the way, talking of old Singleton's theory of eccentric collectors, it suddenly struck me what a suspicious place my house would be to the amateur detective. Do you know, I don't believe anyone's been all round it for ten years except myself and the housemaid! Now I come to think of it, I wonder I've never had the police in looking for stolen diamonds.' And after having another drink he went out.

During his absence there was a ferment of excitement among those privileged to know the story. Naturally we did not exactly shout it on the housetops, but it soon went the round of the 'fine arts committee,' and it was our sole topic of conversation for days. I say the sole topic, but it was less a topic than a whole series of problems, as, for example, was Singleton right, or could it be a different picture? How had it got there? Had the Colonel an explanation? If he had stolen it, what ought we to do about it? Was the Colonel mad? Did he habitually steal things?

The answer to the last question was a decided negative, partly no doubt because the wish was father to the thought. A single escapade might be one thing, a career of stealing pictures for the most artistic motives would make him no better than an ordinary burglar. Besides, it did not tally with the facts. The Colonel's finds were by general agreement real old masters; yet no other picture of value was recorded to have been missed from any gallery. Yet why on earth had he selected this particular Botticelli to steal? It added little in the aggregate to his collection: apparently he had not even any particular admiration for it. Besides, how had he managed to do it? and how on earth did he expect to escape detection, when all his familiar friends were amateurs of art? And why had he given the game away to Singleton, except on Ledwell's charitable supposition that 'he thought Peter too silly to notice'?

The Dean half-heartedly put forward the suggestion that the Colonel was the Protestant fanatic, saying rather indefinitely that such things had been known before, to which Charles contemptuously replied that for that matter ecclesiastical authorities had been guilty of vandalism.

The Colonel's attitude on his last evening in town was much discussed ; some declared it was an admission of guilt, others that guilty or not he simply had not realised what we were talking about, others that he had a perfect explanation up his sleeve and was merely laughing at us.

During this period Singleton was generally absent from the Dover. I think he felt he had rather made a fool of himself.

A fortnight afterwards we heard that Aspinall was in town, for he had left a message at the club asking Ledwell to dinner for the next Saturday.

The same evening Singleton came into the club. Paddy Harrison, Ledwell, and Charles were there besides myself.

'Well,' he said, 'I suppose we'd better drop this now, about Aspinall. Still, I think you'll agree that it was a good joke when I started it.'

'Joke?' said Paddy. 'What joke?'

'You don't mean to say I ever took you in, Paddy, do you? Of course Ledwell and Chambers simply fell into it because they'd believe anything unfavourable to anyone. I think I'll start a rumour that the Dean's a bigamist, to see if they won't swallow that.'

'Let's be quite clear,' said Ledwell. 'I take it you refer to your story about Aspinall and the picture. Did you really just invent it?'

Singleton nodded.

'As a mere matter of interest, and for future information,' said Charles, 'will you tell us if you did it extempore, or whether you rehearsed it for some time?'—and he proceeded to give the most admirable imitation of a man admitting he has been fooled.

But, even in those far-off days of practical joking, nobody seriously accepted Singleton's explanation. Apart from anything else, the *dénouement* had been so extraordinarily unconvincing. Singleton was not an actor by nature or occupation.

I think Paddy more or less expressed the general feeling by remarking to me, as we walked home together, 'You know, if I'd believed it for one moment, I'd have pointed out to him that I thought it about the damned rottenest joke I'd ever heard.'

I agreed.

'What's more,' he went on, 'I don't like this show a bit. Obviously, he's seen Aspinall since he got back to town, and been persuaded to put forward this asinine explanation. As long as it was merely a question of his having the damned picture, I'd believe

it was all right somehow, because I'd trust Aspinall anywhere. But unless there's something pretty wrong with it, why in hell does he send poor old Peter round making a fool of himself with a story no one's going to believe? I can't make it out.'

'Nor can I,' I answered, and we wished each other good-night.

Two days afterwards—it was one of those gloomy, foggy autumn mornings which we are told are becoming less common in London—Paddy, the Dean and myself were still discussing the question over the smoking-room fire, Paddy declaring that as soon as he saw Aspinall he would ask him the truth straight out, when the Colonel himself dropped in to have a glass of Madeira, self-possessed and unconcerned as ever.

'Look here, Aspinall,' said Paddy, 'what's this little joke Peter's been having on us—or you've been having on him—about this Madonna, I mean?'

'Oh, that,' said the Colonel with a laugh. 'I really oughtn't to have done it. Bad luck on poor old Peter, I'm afraid. But you couldn't believe how easily he fell into it: I couldn't resist letting him believe it. Haven't I always told Peter I didn't think his views on art worth listening to? They might be, if he took the trouble to find out what he's talking about. But he never looks at a picture long enough to notice what it's like. So I thought it would be fun to prove it. It was only necessary to look like a guilty conspirator—— Of course it was a bit late in the evening, too.'

'But,' pursued Paddy, 'if that's what happened, why on earth was he telling that cock-and-bull story on Tuesday night by way of explanation?'

'Well, you see he had to put forward some explanation. I gave him *carte blanche* to say he invented the story to rag me, but he seemed to think that rather invidious, so the only other thing to say was that it was a joke on you. I told him nobody could believe that. Anyhow, it does show that Peter ought to learn some more about art.'

Even Paddy was silenced, at any rate till Aspinall had departed.

'Well,' said the Dean quietly, as soon as the Colonel had gone, 'if it was a more Biblical phrase, I should say that took the bun. I've heard Aspinall tell some stories which were hard to swallow. But the idea of anyone—let alone one of an august coterie—not sober enough to know the "Palatine Madonna"! Why, it's been reproduced in all the illustrated papers for weeks, even if one had never been to the National Gallery.'

'Yes,' said Paddy. 'I dare say it's one of the stories that no one

is expected to believe, but are put about to test our faith. But it so happens that at midday I have to deliver a lecture on Herodotus, so I fear we must put off the conclusion of this discussion till some other time.'

But concluded it never was. For by the next time I met him the 'Palatine Madonna' had been returned to the National Gallery as mysteriously as it had disappeared. A messenger-boy brought it back, wrapped up in brown paper and with no trace whence it had come. There is a full account of the incident in the newspapers of the period.

I own it was a relief to the Dover Fine Arts Committee, less for our love of art than for our love of the Colonel. The return of the picture seemed to rehabilitate him, whatever his motives might have been for removing it. I strongly suspected Ledwell of going round furtively to the National Gallery to make sure it was not only a copy that had been returned, but outwardly he was as convinced as any of us that Aspinall was now justified. Even if he had taken the picture home to have a quiet look at it, even if he had been the Protestant fanatic of the Dean's theory, we could not see that in effect he had done any particular harm except to the *amour-propre* of the Director of the National Gallery, for whom (at that time particularly) we felt no consideration—though perhaps those old controversies are best left in oblivion.

Personally, I felt particularly relieved, for that night I was to dine with the Colonel, and I had been afraid things would be rather strained. Ledwell was to be there too. That was a departure from Aspinall's usual custom, but he had accidentally invited each of us for the same day.

We both thought that we might reasonably hope for a genuine explanation: equally we both knew it was no good trying to lead the conversation round in a direction not intended by our host. Dinner proceeded therefore without any particular mention of pictures, till as he finished his port Ledwell remarked quite casually:

'Got anything new lately, Aspinall? I remember all these pictures in here pretty well, don't I?'

'I dare say, unless it would be that Fabritius—not really a Fabritius, as you will have observed.'

'But a good contemporary.'

'So I thought. I've one or two things upstairs, if you don't mind walking so far. Fill your pipe first, of course.'

Upstairs we went—one, two, three flights. Already I felt con-

vinced it would be the same room where Peter Singleton claimed to have seen the lost Madonna.

Aspinall walked in, lighted the gas, and swung the bracket round so as to throw the light upon a little picture. It was obviously a Canaletto.

'Has that been here long?' asked Ledwell.

'Two days,' said Aspinall, looking at it critically, as he smoked his cigar. 'But it's going to stop there now, because it looks perfect in that light. Better even than the last picture I hung there. This one used to be in the scullery. Good, I think, for a Canaletto.'

'How did you get it?' I asked.

'From my little man down at Norwich. I do a lot of business with him.'

'Is he a dealer?'

'Yes, but more than a provincial dealer, because he's got a curious flair for spotting genuine pictures. We carry on business in an odd way. When he gets a picture, he wires me the painter and sometimes the subject and his price. For example, in this case he just wired "Canaletto £15," and I accepted.'

'Isn't he ever wrong?'

'Regarding the painters, he's got an error of about 30 per cent., qualitatively, not quantitatively, I mean. I allow for that in estimating the prices. Of course he could plant one fake on me, but it isn't worth his while. I dare say he makes a pretty good thing out of it in a quiet way.'

We descended for coffee. In the library Aspinall showed us another recent acquisition, an early Flemish picture. The Doctor, I remember, was particularly struck by it.

'Did this come from the same man?' he asked. 'If so, I agree he's a pretty good judge.'

Aspinall nodded.

'Is it rude,' pursued Ledwell, 'to ask how much you paid for that?'

'As a matter of fact, I got it for nothing. My man at Norwich insisted on giving it me as a present, in return for a supposed favour. Unusual in an art dealer, I think you'll agree.'

'*Timeo Danaos*,' I quoted. 'What exactly was the matter with it?'

'Do you remember what Theodore of Tarsus said to the devil?'

But Ledwell evidently thought he had struck a promising line of inquiry. 'Tell us about the favour, Aspinall,' he said.

'Interesting as the devil always is, nothing will persuade me you are not concealing some guilty secret, if you continue talking of him rather than of your dealer.'

Aspinall laughed.

'As you will. I suppose you may as well have the story. I believe it is an act of virtue to explain mysteries. But take some brandy first—unless you prefer gin. You too, Chambers. . . .

'Well, my man in Norwich has a nephew carrying on business in London. Personally, I won't have anything to do with the fellow. He chooses to style himself "Delavigne's Florentine Gallery." Perhaps you know the place.'

Ledwell whistled softly. 'I can't say I ever cared for that man either.'

'Well, we shan't be troubled with him much longer, I understand. But to return to my little man; when he wired "Botticelli £65," I rather naturally accepted, though I suppose the price might have made one suspicious. Still, my wildest suspicions were nothing compared with my surprise when two days later the damned thing turned up. Being a man of cautious habits, I said nothing particular—not to anyone else, that is—I just put it away, hung it up in what I thought a good place, and wired down to Norwich.'

'I should think that was a difficult telegram to word tactfully, wasn't it?' I put in.

'Well, it might have been. But I had a kind of idea he might be anticipating trouble, and so it appeared. Anyhow, he came up to London pretty quickly. I rather wondered what he would have to say about it.'

'And what had he?' I put in.

'First he pretended he had never seen the picture before. That I thought was rather thin. When he asked "Isn't it a genuine Botticelli?" I said "No," such being my opinion. Then he suddenly burst into tears, almost literally, poor little man, and said, "It is my sister's son, it is my sister's son; do not be hard on him. He will be ruined." That was rather embarrassing, so I gave him some brandy and asked him whether he suggested that his nephew had forged it, stolen it, or merely formed the subject of the picture.'

'What was his answer to that?'

'Oh, he had quite a credible story. At least I thought it was. Apparently his nephew was very hard up, or said so: so he wrote to his uncle, saying he had a Botticelli, which for some reason he couldn't put up for sale, though he would have to take any offer

for it. And so he bounced the old chap into offering it to me, without even taking a look at it first. He knew he was doing wrong there, because I've told him long ago that I wouldn't buy a picture postcard on his nephew's recommendation. Heaven only knows what good that fellow thought he was doing himself, but I can only suppose he had read in the papers that the police had a clue, and wanted to dump it where it was unlikely to be found; besides he got the sixty-five pounds. As a matter of fact, you see, he was quite right in banking on my not giving the alarm till I had heard what his old uncle had to say on the subject.'

'Yes,' said Ledwell. 'I never disputed that Delavigne, or whatever he calls himself, was sharp enough. It was his only apparent merit.'

'It was. Well, as soon as I found out it was his little game, I wanted to hand it over to the police. But his uncle was so desperately upset that I finally agreed to keep it for not more than a fortnight. By that time apparently his nephew would arrange to have fled overseas, which I agreed was a very prudent course in the circumstances. It was silly of me to show it to Peter, of course; but it did look so well by gaslight in the maid's bedroom.'

'Poor old Peter! He's had a pretty thin time about it.'

'Well, I can't say I found it altogether pleasant, especially when I found everyone knew it was here. Even now perhaps it would be as well not to talk too much about it for the present. I don't know exactly what crime I've committed, but I still feel rather apprehensive.'

'Don't worry,' said Ledwell. 'The National Gallery will be much too pleased to get it back to make many inquiries.'

'Yes, I expect they're pretty glad. I hate a picture leaving the house myself.' The Colonel looked wistfully at his early Flemish master. 'It was nice of him to give me that. And of course it isn't a real Botticelli.'

'Oh, surely,' said Ledwell, 'it's one of the few Botticelli's everyone admits.'

'No, no, doctor. I defer to your opinion on Italian pictures, as a general rule; but you can't pretend that you've examined it as carefully as I did.' The Colonel gave us all some more brandy. 'I can tell you I looked at it pretty closely. Besides, it had never been hung in a proper light before. No, it's certainly not a Botticelli. But it did look well in the housemaid's bedroom.'

CECIL BINNEY.

A THING WHICH IS HAPPENING.

It is interesting to speculate on the number of things which could or might happen, or perhaps I should say to consider the fact that anything may happen. It is still more interesting to strike up an acquaintance, as it were, with one of those Things Which Might Happen and hobnob with it a little. The hobnobbing, of course, could be of short duration or of such duration as to develop into a close acquaintanceship and a regular habit, a favourite recreation and resource, or, on the other hand, a more or less evil fascination and a nightmare—a bad habit. Hobnobbing with things which might happen has led to the happening of things which may never have been intended by the hobnobber in the beginning.—I mean to the writing of books descriptive of fancied or possible futures. There is an inexhaustible pleasure in endeavouring to imagine ‘what the world will be like,’ as the interesting phrase is, in the future, or in imagining the obvious movement in a certain direction as being suddenly arrested by something quite unforeseen, like the arrival of H. G. Wells’ Martians on the earth in ‘The War of the Worlds.’ It would seem too that, as often as not, a mistake which is made by those who would anticipate the future of humanity is to suppose that a change which is taking place will continue to take place indefinitely or until a logical conclusion is reached, as, for example, that because machinery has come to be of great importance in the world, more and more machinery and more elaborate machinery will continue to be made until machinery will obviate the work of human hands and labour will be abolished.

Even Mr. George Bernard Shaw, who wishes—I infer this from his writings—to be regarded as a quite unromantic and even matter-of-fact person, has succumbed to the mysterious fascination of the Incalculable, the absurd, impossible and extremely romantic Thing Which Might Happen. The Thing which has placed him under its influence from the beyond, where the vast shadowy host is gathered on the frontiers of the world and where we may wander imaginatively, is a sudden extension of the normal length of life of man (a thing which, in a romantic novel, I can almost imagine him deprecating in a superior manner). When I first read Mr. Shaw

he led me to believe that he would never on any account countenance the foisting of Romance on the public, and I am really surprised at his giving way after all in this deplorable manner. The strange thing about it is that the character who defends the prognostication in 'Back to Methuselah,' when somebody else points out that it would be impossible for a person to live for a couple of centuries or so, has no defence to offer except to ask 'How do you know?'—which is exactly how every romancer defends his romances against charges of improbability. Anyhow, to quote the title of a portion of the play, 'The Thing Happens.'

A friend of mine once mentioned to me a thing which he believed would happen as a logical outcome of certain social conditions and scientific discoveries. His Thing was an application of the differentiation theory of species to man, as a result of which man as a species would become two or more species. It was obvious that that would happen, he contended, because the tendency of specialism (one of these inevitable forces, apparently, which it is futile to resist) was to segregate men, first of all and for a beginning, into manual workers and brain workers. He said with great assurance that it was a scientific fact that an organ which ceased to be used gradually disappeared, and that therefore the brains of workers who were engaged in the machinelike operations of modern industry would gradually disappear and the brainlessness would be transmitted to their offspring until manual workers would be so stupid that they would become a new species, in contrast to the brain workers, whose brains, by the nature of their work, would achieve an extraordinary degree of development and whose bodies would correspondingly decline. Thus would manual workers be relieved of the burden of minds which they had nothing to occupy and brain workers of muscles for which they had no use. It is extraordinary how such a theory drives the mind to a refuge in another theory—that of the equality of man, which, after all, is only that mankind is a single species or not mankind at all. It is still more extraordinary to realise how dangerously easy it is to depart from that theory and of what enormous importance that theory is, whether you depart from it or not, and that the equality of man, which you may have supposed to mean that people are of the same capacity or something else obviously untrue, means that and nothing else. It comes with a slight shock to realise that the phrase 'the equality of man,' which is so hackneyed that it never rings true, really has a meaning, just as it comes with a slight shock to find that there

is really beauty in a song or poem which is 'done to death' if you only get into the atmosphere of strangeness and newness in which deep feeling is born.

I will not pursue, tempting as they are, the extremely interesting vistas which speculation about such a Thing Which Might Happen as the differentiation of the *genus homo* opens in the mind, but I wish to point out in a very practical way that the poetic anticipation of my friend is, as a possible future happening, not so remote as some people may think, and perhaps also that such an eventuality would be quite as fundamental and catastrophic a change as something like the collision of the earth with another planet. The anticipation is quite a change from what became an orthodox anticipation of romantic scientists, or rather romancers about science, like Mr. Wells: the ordinary anticipation of the effect on humanity of the direction in which the world is at present progressing was that men's minds would develop enormously and their limbs and bodies dwindle, through lack of use, to rudiments. Wells made his Martians, who made use of machines for bodies, almost all heads, and when a scientist describes his conception of what men will be like in a thousand years or so he always makes a point of saying that men's heads will be very large. It is not clear, of course, that the development of the human mind leads to large-headedness; in fact the normal assumption is that a man with a big head is inclined to be stupid. However, what the scientist means is that men's minds will undergo enormous improvement. He means that every man's mind will be an enormous improvement on the ordinary man's mind to-day. The anticipation of my friend, however, is that the minds of all men will not undergo progressive improvement, but only the minds of those men or classes of men whose minds are cultivated and used. This would appear to be a much more logical anticipation than the older one of the Victorian Era, which jumped gaily to the conclusion (apparently false) that labour-saving machinery would free all men from the necessity of labour. The division between manual workers and brain workers is becoming more and more strong and plain in modern countries every year, that is to say, the minds of all men are not undergoing development but only the minds of certain classes of men. It is therefore assumed by my friend that the unanticipated scission will continue to widen until it is complete. He does not say that those who fostered industrialism at the beginning of the nineteenth century made a mistake and that the mistake ought to be undone:

instead he accepts the mistake as inevitable and says that it ought to go on being made and made more badly than ever.

The minds of the masses of the people, an increasing number, are not undergoing development as a result of progress in the organisation of industry, because the sort of work on which they are engaged is not only not the sort of work which develops the mind, but it is known not to be the sort of work which develops the mind and it is not intended to be the sort of work which develops the mind. That is as far as I need go, because it is as much, I think, as can be supported by evidence which is well known to people who read newspapers. Perhaps it would be hard to cite a better example of the embodiment of advanced ideas in industrial and social matters than Mr. Henry Ford. One of the ideas which is fundamental in his outlook is that the majority of men are disinclined to use their intelligence in everyday work and welcome work which calls for little exercise of the mental faculties, that is to say, monotonous mechanical work. He does not say that even if that is so, it is extremely dangerous to gratify their disinclination for effort of the mind. But that is beside the point. He does not claim that his manner of organising industry develops the minds of the workers. I have not gone so far as to say (though I believe it has been said) that the sort of work which modern industry provides for men is intended to deteriorate their minds, and I do not say that Mr. Ford in his application of the principle of the division of labour to industry is actuated in part by the motive of wishing to deteriorate the mentalities of his workmen, but it is quite clear that he knows the work does not develop their minds, and I imagine that he knows that it deteriorates them. Here is an instance, then, of a man of the most modern and up-to-date sort who, not least, it seems to me, because of his courage and the logic of his mind, has leapt to the forefront among 'captains of industry' and even among philosophers and artists, and who says quite plainly that the work in his factories, the most highly-developed of their kind, is not intended to develop the mind and does not develop it. I emphasise this because we were always led, by apostles of science and discoverers of the nineteenth century, to suppose that the logical, inevitable and joyful outcome of the progress in the sort of knowledge with which they were concerned would, through the removal by machinery of the necessity for labour, be an extraordinary and unprecedented improvement and development of men's minds. Now we are assured by a

distinguished man who is ruthless in his logical application of scientific discoveries to industry that it is essential to render men as much like machines and therefore as little intelligent as possible. Thus the scientists, deliverers of humanity, have raised a man who is confounding them with their own wisdom. He does not know that he is and perhaps they do not know that he is, but they ought to be scientific enough to know that humanity is waiting to be delivered again.

Mr. George Bernard Shaw himself, socialist and believer in the theory that machinery will save men from drudgery, has realised the problem which is bound up with the combination in industry of specialism, division of labour, and machinery. He has said somewhere (I believe in a journalistic 'interview,' but I quote from memory), 'Modern industry has produced a multitude of people who don't know how to do anything and don't know how anything is done.' That is a peculiarly significant statement. Plainly he did not mean that the human 'cogs in the wheel' of industry do not know how to do anything at all, etc. For example, he did not mean that an employé in a motor-car factory does not know how to screw a wing on to a motor-car with a spanner, or he did not mean that a girl in a jam factory does not know how to tie a paper cover on a jar of jam with a piece of string. If they did not know how to do these things the things would not be done. What he meant was not exactly that workmen do not know how to do anything in its entirety. The things which they do they know how to do in their entirety. They are fully acquainted with the niceties of the adjustment of screws and the tying of string, and may exercise some very limited skill in their work. Skill and finish (even what the French call *finesse*) may be applied to the most trivial things: indeed, it may be said that the application of skill to trivial things is characteristic of the artist. In the small matter of putting on the brake of a motor-car when driving, skill, even supreme skill, may be used. To jam on the brake is unskilful and therefore inartistic: by causing the wheels of the car to skid it may even defeat its own purpose. Mr. Shaw meant rather that nothing which they do is entire, that they were not permitted to do anything in its entirety, that everything which they do merely contributes to some whole of which, as a whole, they have no knowledge. It is very striking how unimportant men have become in industry. I think the feeling that they have done so may be experienced extremely well by looking into one of the very interesting motor

periodicals, which usually contain articles, accompanied by photographs, describing the organisation and arrangement of motor manufactories. The workmen appearing in the photographs have a uniformly dull and uninteresting appearance which it is impossible to describe adequately. It is not only that they appear uninteresting, but they appear uninterested in the extreme, and the articles are all about what the machines do : the participation of the men is treated almost as something which would be avoided if possible. No light of joy, or even mild satisfaction, or, indeed, any emotion whatever is perceptible in their countenances : year by year they seem to become more and more immature in appearance, less and less like men and more and more like very melancholy schoolboys. The difficulty of conveying the impression which they give is probably due to the fact that they are so unimpressive.

The point then is that workmen are, or tend to be, engaged on tasks which are not complete in themselves but which are merely portions of tasks. They are not allowed to finish anything : neither are they allowed to begin anything. They are like men who should be permitted to partake at meal times of a single course only, or even of a portion of a course only. This raises in me a wonderful vision of a modern efficient meal in which the labour should be scientifically distributed among the eaters according to their particular capacities and tastes ; one man eating all the soup, all the soup with all the spoons, and experiencing in his single person the combined and concentrated essence of everybody else's comforting sensation produced by soup, being thus in a position to derive a gradually increasing intensity of soup-sensation, a more subtle and more highly developed satisfaction than any which has hitherto been known in relation to the drinking of soup. Certainly meals would be eaten more quickly if specialisation were applied to them, and the economy in the service would be very remarkable. Instead of putting ten pints of soup in ten plates, for example, the ten pints or so might be put in one large-capacity plate and one man might carry the plate in one journey to the table ; as well all the courses might be served together and the diners would thus function as a giant, twenty men working together with the enormously increased efficiency which such a combination would produce.

But to come back to earth. Workmen in a mass-production factory are tantalised very much as a man would be who was never allowed to take anything at meal times except, say, salt. The

factory makes things but they do not make anything. They do not even belong to a body which has organised itself to make things. There is not even the satisfaction of creation for the corporate body. The workman is not greatly interested in helping to make what he helps to make. In relation to machinery he acts very much like the boy who accompanies a plumber to hand him his tools. The boy, however, will one day be a plumber, but the machine-minder is not intended ever to be anything but a machine-minder, God help him. The people who really experience satisfaction, even superlative satisfaction, are the designers of the things which are made. The designer of a motor-car may point to it proudly and exultingly as his own work and feel a thrill when he sees one of it, as it were, and touches the miraculous materialisation of bodiless ideas which came mysteriously into his head.

I have always been very strongly impressed with the necessity for a man, if he is to obtain the utmost from himself and realise his possibilities most completely, of doing the work for which he is best fitted. This declaration is, of course, not at all remarkable. I am sure I share the impression with an enormous number of people. But for my own part the impression has amounted almost to an obsession, and I think that was because the possibility of a man's doing the work or thing for which he is best fitted is becoming smaller and smaller as time goes on nowadays. The work must be complete: it must not be the beginning of anything or the end of anything or the ninety-ninth operation on anything. There is a difference between the division of labour which lets one man do one thing and another man another and that which prevents anyone from doing anything. I think that every man should be, to some extent, an artist, because I think that every man is meant to be, to some extent, an artist. An artist is, *inter alia*, a person who can transform the meanest drudgery into joyful play by the strength of the creative force by which he is actuated. Other people are glad when their work is done: he alone never wants it to be done: he is always imagining endless spells of enchanting work. Men should derive personal satisfaction from their work. They do, as a matter of fact, derive personal satisfaction from all sorts of work: I find it hard to imagine how a man can delight in the solution of mathematical problems, but there are undoubtedly men who so delight. The satisfaction which people derive from work is artistic satisfaction. We speak of high art because there is low art, the art of the man who makes a chair or a gate or clips

a hedge, the art of the man who is an adept at breaking stones. The craftsman is thus the equal and fellow of the painter, the writer, and the sculptor: the cobbler shares the divine afflatus with the musician. I have found the idea of the necessity of artistic self-expression greatly emphasised by Mr. Shaw, who, indeed, prescribed it for a youthful tendency to profligacy, but, much as I have been influenced by that wonderful writer, I have never read any passage of his in which he proposed a remedy for the gradual withdrawal of man's opportunity for artistic self-expression. On the necessity of self-expression I will not dwell. It is a burning conviction of mine for which I can offer no justification except that of Samuel Butler, who used to say that there are certain truths, the most fundamental truths, which are like the axioms of Euclid—they cannot be demonstrated. The creative instinct exists in all men, and it is that instinct which is at the bottom of the idea of freedom: in order that a man may express himself he must be free to do so: he must not be expected to conform to the tastes of others which are not his. The instinct is not present in equal strength in all men any more than any other instinct is, but there is an irreducible minimum present in every man.

I expected to say more about self-expression than I have said, when I came to it, but I suppose that is the way with every fundamental thing: you cannot add to it or improve on it. It makes you dumb. But it may be said of self-expression that the instinct is quite incapable of vicarious satisfaction. Nevertheless a strange idea seems to be abroad that it can be vicariously satisfied, an idea which may be related to the idea of the division of labour. Certain classes of people have come to specialise in self-expression, and the idea seems to be that they make up in themselves for the self-expression of which the 'working classes' are deprived. It is as if the discovery had been made that it would be much more economical and efficient if the more egotistic people specialised in self-expression at which they are so good and the more modest ceased their feeble attempts to do what they do so badly. Let the people abandon their crude efforts to sing, and listen to a man who is practically nothing but a walking voice and who progresses always in the direction of having a still better voice. Let the people forswear their timid little adventures and romances and be content to read of the wonderful lives of the ultra-daring and courageous. Why encourage people to entertain uncertain and wavering opinions when there is no necessity for them to have any at all, but merely

to let the most strong-minded people have them ever so much better for them ?

The principle of the division of labour is thus carried into the moral sphere. As the industrialist says, 'Why should one man be allowed to make one thing when an enormous amount of time can be saved by keeping one man or one section of men at a single operation in the course of the job of making the thing?' So nobody says, but there is a tendency for everybody to say, 'Why should one man be a whole man all to himself when an enormous amount of energy and trouble (especially trouble) could be saved by allowing a man to be a bit of a man only? Let there be a few whole men who will serve, in the scheme of life, to originate and direct, and who will be ever so much finer and more successful as men than the present multitude of more or less poor specimens. What is the necessity for millions of individuals when these millions might be made to function as a single individual: Man, Humanity? Why should not some concentrate all their energies on working and others theirs on playing? The work would be more serious and the play more frivolous, and thus better products in every way, just as a motor-car is better than a horse and cart because it is faster. Then let the more intellectual people think and the less intellectual merely feel. The thinking will be more abstract and unbiassed and the feeling more uncontrolled and spontaneous. After all this is the age of specialism, when everything is being done better than it has ever been done before.' It is as if we had decided at last to divide the individual.

That brings me to what is really the point about the question of division of labour. One says that the final object of anything being done at all is that it may be done supremely well. A thing must be done in the interest of the thing itself, as it were. It is better not to do a thing at all than to do it badly. The thing comes to transcend the doer. Then, whatever is worth doing at all is worth letting somebody else do. It is sufficient for the mob that professional football players play better football every year. Football progresses. It is sufficient for the people that there are superb exponents of the arts and crafts. The arts and crafts progress.

But is merely to do it well the object of doing a thing? Is there any satisfaction for a person who is prevented from doing a thing in knowing that somebody else is an expert at it? The answers to those questions are contained in the fact that there is

satisfaction to be obtained from the doing of a thing, no matter how badly the thing is done, and the satisfaction arises from the doing of it, or rather there is a special satisfaction, quite irreplaceable, which arises from the doing of a thing and which is quite distinct and separate from the satisfaction of seeing the thing done better by somebody else, and also from the satisfaction of doing it very well oneself. It is sometimes forgotten that the desire to excel is rare and unusual and that, indeed, it is in the nature of man to maintain a balance in his desires and activities. The person who desires to excel sometimes imagines that everyone else shares his desire and consequently sees life as a furious scramble for prominence, while, of course, ordinary people wonder how he can be bothered with ambition and quite definitely desire to be obscure. One might say that is their ambition. Their multitude of small achievements is the foundation upon which the exceptional man raises his edifice, but it would appear that modern ideas tend in the direction of attempting to erect wonderful edifices of achievement on—nothing.

H. E. O'TOOLE.

MY LORD VIRGIL.

BY F. McEACHRAN.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE in his dissertation on *Urn Burial* (*Hydriothaphia*) has a touching passage on the fate of the virtuous men of old, condemned by Dante, unwillingly but of necessity, to dwell for ever in the Limbo of *Inferno*: and in a beautiful period he laments the fate of Virgil, whom neither his sweet verse nor his infinite human sympathy could save from the dark world below. For Epicurus and his sect, who denied God and the world to be, he shed no tears and says no word of sorrow, though their tomb lie deeper than Limbo; but for Virgil he cannot refrain from giving utterance to a sad and puzzled query.

We also to-day, when Homer and his heroes of winged word lapse slowly into the oblivion whence they sprung, still cling, with desperate if enfeebled grasp, to the figure of the greatest Latin, and for us the echo of his words, fainter now and ever fainter, still possesses, unimpaired, its power and charm. For us, as for Sir Thomas Browne, to reflect upon his lot in the *Inferno* of Dante cannot be but a mournful meditation and a source of deepest melancholy; and though we owe a debt of profound gratitude to the great poet who has rendered such homage to Virgil's name, piling Pelion of immortality on Ossa of fame, yet we cannot refrain from a feeling of regret for the fate so eloquently apportioned to him.

It is no light thing to be one among the 'strengthless nations of the dead,' and noble Odysseus, in the dark House of Erebus, finds none more sick at heart than Achilles, whose lot he fain would praise. Is not Achilles lord of the dead in Hades as he was lord of men on the plains of windy Troy? Yet Achilles finds little solace in the soothing words of his erstwhile comrade. 'Nay, seek not to speak soothingly to me of death, glorious Odysseus. I should choose, so I might live on earth, to serve as a hireling of another, of some portionless man whose livelihood was but small, rather than be lord over all the dead that have perished.' The regret for life is a long note of dolour in the song of the Summoning of the Dead. There are none who are free from it, none who are reconciled to

the bloodless phantom life; nor is there any yet who would leave it, who would cut the feeble cable and find in utter extinction the peace so much desired, for one and all they greedily lap up the blood that Odysseus has shed for them, and willingly would hear the words of a living man.

Theirs is a sad life, but Dante knows one that is worse. Of how much sorrow must we deem his lot full to overflowing, who, conscious of having lived the best of lives, and aware of the bliss that heaven can give, is condemned to live for ever cut off from it; at most grudgingly allowed to see the wider hopes of Purgatory as a guide to one more blessed than himself. The regret for the sweetness of life is poignant in the Hades of Homer, but there at least none other is elect, none other is called to a better home, if it be not the eternal gods on the snow-capped tops of Olympus. How much more bitter the regret of him who knows what might have been, had fate treated him with kindlier hand. Of the men that Virgil created some are happy and some are not. Some, like Dido, appear for a moment, with mien of sorrow—and are gone: some, like Palinurus, must wander for long years before they hope to pass the Stygian ford, while some, like Anchises, are placed in Elysian fields,—of all antiquity most like to the Limbo of Dante,—but the fate of one and all fades into the dimness of morning mist before the long exile to which Virgil by Dante is condemned.

'My guide, my lord, my sweet master,' he calls him. Together they descend the nine circles of Inferno and ascend the terraces of Purgatory, then each to go his own way, Dante with Beatrice to the bliss of Paradise, Virgil to return to the 'lungo esilio,' the long exile. We who feel unhappy at the departure of Aeneas, clothed in piety, from Dido, cannot be unmoved at this greater separation, to which time can bring no relief and which no Sychæus can mitigate by the return of equal love for love. Throughout Inferno and Purgatory Virgil is Dante's guide and comforter, the friend who leads him from the life of error to the 'vita serena' and to that bliss which can never be his own. Through Limbo, the edge of Inferno, Virgil leads him, and our sorrow for this most tragic figure in the whole Middle Ages begins on a note of deepest woe; Limbo is indeed no place of physical torture; there are no lacerations of the quivering flesh, but neither is there lack of something worse.

'Here there was no plaint that could be heard, *except of sighs which caused the eternal air to tremble*, and this arose from the sadness, without torment, of the crowds which were many and great, both

of children, and of women, and of men. "I wish thee to know," said my good master to me, "that they sinned not, and though they have merit, it suffices not: for they had not baptism, which is the portal of the faith that thou believest, and seeing they were before Christianity they worshipped not God aright.

"*And of these am I myself*, for such defects and for no other fault are we lost, and only in so far afflicted, *That without hope we live in desire.*"

'Great sadness took me at the heart on hearing this, because I knew men of much worth who in that Limbo were suspended.'

And, so, cut off from a bliss which he can never share, and the mere instrument of salvation for one whom he leads, Virgil opens to us the doors of Inferno and the fields of Purgatory: never for one moment, though he rarely gives expression to it in words, forgetting the awfulness of his position, and never for one moment railing at the Providence which has so ordained. Dante, led by him, likewise does not forget it, and likewise never for one moment refers to it, but follows, humbly and reverently, this loving friend, whom he adored above all men, as a courteous, noble, sweet and loving Father.

Virgil is in no wise a bloodless eidolon, a simulacrum called up by the poet to provide a motif for a Tartarean excursus. Far from being a mere appendage to Dante, he lives in Inferno as intensely as Dante himself, and his reactions of love or anger are as human as art can make them. He smiles and praises when Dante comports himself in seemly manner, and when this is not so he chides him severely. Dante, when attracted too keenly by his curiosity to the foul quarrel of the fever-stricken Falsifiers, is sharply rebuked by his mentor, so loving and anxious for the weal of his soul. "'Now keep looking a little longer and I quarrel with thee.'" When I heard him *speak to me in anger* I turned towards him with such shame that it comes over me again as I but think of it.'

Dante stands rebuked, for always he bows lovingly to Virgil's decision. Virgil scorns the Trimmers, they who were neither for nor against. 'Let us not speak of them, but pass on.' With Dante in the pool of Styx, in harmony of hate, he thrusts back the sinner Argenti into the black mud—'away there with the other swine,' and his hatred is as intense as that of his pupil. He protects Dante from the fallen angels and from the Gorgon before the gates of the fire-shot city of Dis. He comforts him when afraid. He is patient and full of wisdom. He explains God's will to Dante, and when he

reaches the thing that cannot be explained bows sadly and willingly before it. For thus it is, and so it is ordained :

‘*desine fata deum flecti sperare precando.*’

He is serener than Dante, as is fitting to one who has seen the end and knows the worst, and as one who is in sorrow, but reconciled. Yet all the while we are aware as he follows his path through Purgatory, of a fathomless depth of woe than which nothing in human experience can be worse, and to the hopelessness of which nothing in the world can approach :—the dolour of one condemned, cast out, rejected, and the loving resignation for which the wailing and gnashing of teeth were but a petty resource and a reproach to his deep humanity.

In the circle of the Fraudulent, Malebolge, they come to the ditch of the hypocrites, where the arch-hypocrite Caiaphas lies crucified, face upward, to the ground. Over him pass the hypocrites in slow unending procession, trampling him beneath their feet. There is one terrible comment of Dante, perceiving the blanching of Virgil's face.

‘Then I saw Virgil *marvel* over him that was distended like a cross, so vilely in the eternal exile.’

‘Allor vid’io maravigliar Virgilio
Sopra colui ch’era disteso in croce
Tanto vilmente nel’eterno esilio.’

Virgil had, we imagine, good reason to marvel at the sight before him, that a soul should have thus rejected the chance that was never given to himself. The pathos of his words strikes us far more deeply than would any description of Virgil's face—pale image at most of the inward pain.

Deepest of all perhaps is our sympathy at the encounters in Purgatory. In Purgatory, Virgil, like Dante, is in a world new to him, and, it may be, so much the more attractive. ‘We are strangers here,’ he says to Cato, with a deep ring of truth, for of purgation there is no hope for him. He indeed is a stranger. His sin admits of no purgation. He looks about him and meets many of the souls of antiquity, Cato, Statius, and others; and as ever with Dante, the ‘sweet master’ does not lack due recognition, as much for his humanity as for his supposed prophetic words on the advent of Christ, the magic words

‘*Iam redit et virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna,*’

which saved the soul of Statius and brought him into the fold. He saved others, himself he could not save. Statius greets him :

“ ‘Thou didst send me towards Parnassus to drink in its caves, and there . . . didst light me on to God . . .’ Already was he stooping to embrace my Teacher’s feet, but he said “Brother, do not so, for thou art a shade *and a shade thou seest*,” and, he rising, “Now canst thou comprehend the measure of the love which warms me toward thee, when I forget our nothingness and treat shades as a solid thing.”’

More sorrowful still is the scene with Sordello, an eager soul who would know who Virgil is and whence he comes.

“ ‘Through all the circles of the woeful realm,” answered he, “came I here. A virtue from heaven moved me and with it I come. *Not for doing but for not doing*, have I lost the vision of the high Sun, whom thou desirest and *who too late by me was known*. Down there is a place not sad with torments, but with darkness alone, where the lamentations sound not as wailings but as sighs.

“ ‘*There do I abide with the innocent children*, bitten by the fangs of death ere they were exempt from human sin.

“ ‘*There dwell I*.”’

The constant reminders that Virgil is but a shade, though they are pitiful in their persistence, do but refer to what the end must be, final separation, return to the long exile. ‘*I who am dead*’ is the hidden chorus that accompanies his path through the two worlds. ‘*I with this living man descend*.’ And in Purgatory, where dwell those who live both in *desire* and *hope also*—‘O ye whose end is happy, O spirits already chosen’—the song is made more touching by the contrast with souls of happier lot.

They must part at last. The logic of Aquinas and the iron doctrine ‘*extra ecclesiam nulla salus*’ can make no exception for this most beloved of heathens, and though he depart in sorrow he must go.

He takes his last farewell.

“ ‘Son, the temporal fire and the eternal hast thou seen, and art come to a place where I, of myself, discern no further. Here have I brought thee with wit and with art ; now take thy pleasure for guide : forth art thou from the steep ways, forth art thou from the narrow. Behold then the sun that shinest on thy brow, behold the tender grass, the flowers and the shrubs, which the ground here of itself alone brings forth. Whilst the fair glad eyes are coming

[Beatrice], which weeping made me come to thee, thou canst sit thee down and canst go among them. *No more expect my word, nor my sign.* Free, upright, and whole is thy will, and 'twere a fault not to act according to its prompting; wherefore I do crown and mitre thee over thyself."

He goes. For him no Beatrice with the fair eyes, no tender grass nor flowers, but only a place where 'no plaint can be heard, except of sighs which cause the eternal air to tremble.' We cannot doubt that Dante beheld his departure wistfully, for there are few pupils so loving to their master as Dante is to Virgil. 'Oh courteous Mantuan soul, sweet master, kind master, noble leader,' are to him but ordinary expressions of feeling, and in others also Dante places the deepest love and respect for his master. He speaks of him and of his affectionate care more than once as of a mother's care for her child. Most intensely of all does he recall his presence in the Earthly Paradise, when, overwhelmed by the transcending beauty of Beatrice, he turns to Virgil 'as a little child turns to its mother,' in words throbbing with sorrow for his loss. 'But Virgil had left us bereft of himself, Virgil, sweetest father, Virgil to whom for my weal I gave me up.'

Gone, and gone for ever. Though Dante rises higher and higher and the heavens grow purer and ever purer, as Beatrice and he approach the Empyrean and the all-loving presence of God, our thoughts are drawn away below, where one lives for evermore, *in desire but without hope*; and through the glorious light, the 'santa luce' of the last and most blessed heaven, his pale face we still seem to behold for ever marvelling, obscuring, as it were with a darker strain, the ecstasies of joy.

In the Hades of Homer, the souls are sad indeed. Says Alcinous to Odysseus, "'The night is before us, long, aye, wondrous long, and it is not yet time for sleep in the hall.'" They are sad also in the Fighting Fields, and before Aeneas passes into Elysium, Deiphobus with the mangled body moans his last good-bye. "'Go thou! but I will get me back into the darkness.'" But lower than the soul of Alcinous and lower than the soul of Deiphobus, lies the soul of my lord Virgil, though he be but suspended on the edge of Inferno. The night is wondrous long for him, wondrous long!

REPUTATIONS: TEN YEARS AFTER.

BY CAPTAIN B. H. LIDDELL HART.

IV.

PÉTAÏN: MILITARY ECONOMIST.

THE BLEND OF FABIUS AND CARNOT.

RARELY has history offered such a conjunction of opposites as in the two great French leaders of the later part of the World War. The contrast is a strong argument for the influence of natal environment. For while Foch, the Pyrenean, mingled the fire and imagination of the 'meridional' with the mysticism and tough fibre of the mountain people, Pétain typified the clear, hard-headed business sense of the Nord. And if hasty critics frequently termed Foch 'insane,' the severest critic of Pétain could only say that he regarded war with a sanity of outlook too extreme for him to plumb the depths or scale the heights in that 'impassioned drama.' The characteristics of the two, and the contrast between them, were illustrated to me with truth and brevity by a distinguished French officer who, taking a pencil and paper, drew this simple diagram :-



While Foch is surrounded by an atmosphere of romance, himself a corporal mystery and the very inspiration of legend, the only romantic things about Pétain are his Christian names and eighteen months of his career.

Henri Philippe Benoni Omer Joseph Pétain was born on May 24, 1856, at Cauchy la Tour in the Pas de Calais. Thus in 1914 he was already fifty-eight years of age and—here comes another contrast with Foch—was only a colonel, commanding the 33rd Regiment of Infantry at Arras. Whereas the one had been a focus of attention for nearly twenty years, of international reputation as one of the leaders of French military thought, the other was on the point of passing from comparative obscurity into definite retirement. It was fortunate for France that the outbreak of war saved him for

her service; she could better have spared any other leader—a bold statement, yet true—for without him she might never have survived 1917. Even a Foch would have been more likely to hasten than to check this ruin. How was it that so able a soldier had risen so slowly? Probably because he retained his sanity when most of the French leaders were obsessed with delusions about the 'offensive à outrance.' Anything more repellent to their pre-war outlook than the theory and practice of Pétain from 1915 onwards cannot be conceived. Added to the distrust which is the lot of all who stand against the stream, he never hesitated to express views which might be unpalatable to authority. It is the cause and the explanation why, in every army during peace, many of the ablest and most original minds leave the service as colonels, or earlier. And Pétain, like many reserved men, had an unconscious brusqueness of manner which was a shield for shyness. Even in appearance he was the antithesis of Foch, who when debating important questions with Pétain gave observers the impression of a gamecock pecking furiously—his arguments had a muscular accompaniment—at a graven statue. For Pétain's commanding height and bulk allied to an inhuman calm gave him a statuesque majesty. Perhaps not only birthplace but school environment accentuated the difference, for whereas Foch was a product of the semi-civil Polytechnique, Pétain was a St. Cyrien, and the Spartan discipline of St. Cyr rarely fails to leave its impression on those who pass through it—a harder school even than Sandhurst or West Point. Subsequently he passed through the École de Guerre, and in 1902 became an instructor at the Châlons small arms school, afterwards being appointed an Assistant Professor at the École de Guerre, where he took the course in infantry tactics. Clearness and common sense distinguished his lectures, and in an era when the moral factors were theoretically pressed to the pitch of absurdity, he stressed the importance of the material factors, especially artillery.

Although still a colonel when war broke out, he had acting command of a brigade which formed part of Lanrezac's Fifth Army at the Battle of Charleroi. He handled this so well in checking the German advance across the Meuse—which threatened to cut off this exposed flank army—that at the end of the great retreat, when so many commanders were dismissed, he was promoted to command the 6th Infantry Division. Plunged immediately into the Battle of the Marne, his successful attack on Montceau-les-Provins and beyond contributed to the early success of the Fifth

Army, now under Franchet d'Espérey, which was the only army to score a tactical victory in that strategically decisive battle. By driving back the right of Bülow's Second Army (German) it combined with other factors to cause the German order for a general retreat. The attack of Pétain's division was notable for the strong and well-planned artillery preparation which foreshadowed the method universally adopted later in trench warfare. Pétain's reward came early, for in October he was advanced to command of the 33rd Army Corps which, now that the front was being prolonged to the sea, held the sector near Arras. From command of a regiment to command of an army corps in two months was a record, and if old in years, he proved that his mind was still young and elastic by being almost the first to grasp the change brought about by siege conditions. If there was no scope for the artist there was urgent demand for the organiser, and to Pétain must be given the credit of being the first to apply 'big business' methods to the conduct of the new warfare.

The French command planned to deliver their first large-scale attack of 1915 in this sector, under the direction of Foch. It was to be made by the four army corps of d'Urbal's Tenth Army, and Pétain's corps was at the left centre near Carency. He had organised the attack in minute detail, personally visiting every battery and watching each fire one round in order to see that it had registered on the exact target laid down in the plan. Everywhere he questioned the regimental officers and N.C.O.'s to make sure that they were clear as to their rôle. If such immersion in detail violated the canons of command and would certainly have been anathema to a Foch, it paid in a war where the general was reduced to the rôle of a machine-tender.

The attack was launched on May 9, 1915. While the other corps were quickly held up, with murderous losses, Pétain's men swept through the German defences and on for three miles without a check, the infantry carrying conspicuous markers to enable the artillery to follow their progress. They gained the Vimy Ridge, and for a few hours it seemed that the whole German front might crumble. Twenty miles away, at Lille, the German Army Group headquarters were even taking steps for a possible hasty removal. But the French Higher Command failed to exploit the chance, and for want of reinforcements the gap was closed. By the afternoon German counter-attacks began a pressure which regained part of the lost ground.

In recognition of his personal success, Pétain, next month,

was given command of the Second Army and entrusted with the main share of the September offensive in Champagne, on which vast hopes were pinned. The eternal optimists who prevailed in every army had a vision of the Germans being thrown back over the distant French frontier.

This time, however, Pétain's methodical instincts led him too far, for the supreme and essential asset of surprise was thrown away by a preliminary bombardment which lasted for three days and nights. The method paid up to a point, for the first German positions were quickly overrun, and without severe loss, but the ample warning enabled the Germans to bring up reserves, and their second position defied the attack. Worse still, the 'bag' of 25,000 prisoners was far more than offset by the appalling later losses, due to the folly of the French Higher Command in pressing the attack for days after hope had vanished. The lesson was not lost on Pétain, who had already stopped his attack in disregard of de Castelnau's orders, and his report on the battle became the textbook of the new trench warfare doctrine.

The immortal crisis of Verdun in the spring of 1916 converted his military reputation into popular fame, and if he had been ambitious would have brought him much more. When the German advance began on February 21 it took by surprise a French Higher Command which had neglected the warnings of the storm, and the fact that, unlike previous offensives, it swelled in violence from a comparatively gentle start hid the degree of the danger. Only on February 24 did Joffre's headquarters at Chantilly awake to the grave menace, and late that night de Castelnau departed for Verdun to examine the situation. At his instigation, before leaving, Pétain was summoned to Chantilly and placed by Joffre in charge of the defence of Verdun. The interview was characteristic of these two imperturbable men, Joffre concluding with the remark 'Well, my friend, now you are easy in your mind.' The apparent absurdity meant that Joffre knew his man.

Pétain's first problem was not so much defence as supply. The German heavy guns had closed all avenues except one light railway and the Bar-le-Duc-Verdun road. To push up troops was no use unless they could be fed and supplied with ammunition. The road was already cracking under the strain of incessant transport, and so 8000 pioneers and Territorial troops were brought up to keep it in repair and to double it by parallel tracks. Henceforward the tide of traffic reached the level of 6000 lorries in

twenty-four hours. Pétain organised the front in sectors, each with its own heavy artillery, fixed a line which had to be held at all costs, and threw in repeated counter-attacks. If these gained little ground, they disconcerted and checked the attacking Germans. The advance lost its momentum, slowed down, and although the Germans tried to widen the front of attack to the west bank of the Meuse, they were too late, and by March 8 the immediate danger of a break-through was past. But the very publicity given to the defence had endowed Verdun with a symbolical value definitely superior to its military value. The Germans adopted an attrition policy which was helped by their closeness to the town, and although their advances were slight, they were cumulative in effect, like the erosion of the tide. Worse still, owing to the Germans' clever tactics, the balance of loss now turned against the defender. It was the irony of fate that Pétain, so instinctively saving in lives, should have had to violate his principles in order to be the saviour of Verdun. He did his best to mitigate the strain on the men by a rapid *roulement* of reliefs which kept each division under fire for the shortest possible time. But as a result nearly all the French army was drawn through the mill, and the usure of force crippled the French effort in the projected Somme offensive, throwing the main burden on the British. If this offensive, which began on July 1, was disappointing in its direct results, it at once brought relief to Verdun. From that day on the Germans at Verdun received no new divisions and their advance died out from sheer inanition.

Pétain rightly earned great prestige from this long-sustained defence, but it is just to recognise that his influence there was rather as an organiser than as a commander. On May 1 he had been promoted to command of the Centre Army Group, and Nivelle succeeded him in charge of the Second Army, which was actually defending Verdun.

After July, the distraction caused by the Somme offensive enabled plans to be made for regaining lost ground, and on October 21 and November 15 Mangin conducted those brilliant counter-offensives—highly economical because of their meticulous organisation—which re-took by bites what had been lost by nibbles.

It was yet another jest of fortune that the personal fruits of these successes should be reaped neither by the man who had devised the method nor by the man who had executed it. For when, in December 1916, the rising tide of dissatisfaction compelled the deposition of Joffre as Commander-in-Chief, Nivelle was called

to fill his place. Public opinion contrasted the costly nibbles of the Somme strategy with the dazzling but economical autumn offensives at Verdun, which they associated primarily with Nivelle. This public opinion, however, was not entirely a natural growth.

Pétain was passed over partly because he had raised hostility, and partly because his strength of purpose affrighted the ruling clique, political and military. When Poincaré and Pétain, both shy men under a brusque cloak, had met at Verdun, they had jarred on each other, and an inapt question had drawn from Pétain the blunt reply that France could not hope to win with her existing Government. If the President of the Republic was later to understand and appreciate Pétain, this burst of candour helped to lose him the command-in-chief. But there was another cause. Joffre's staff tended to lay the blame for the popular discontent on the man whose constant demands for troops at Verdun had denuded them of reserves, and thus, in their opinion, contributed to the failure on the Somme. Sensing that Joffre was doomed, they set themselves to pave the way for the succession of Nivelle, through whom they felt more confident of preserving their own control than if Pétain came.

The new régime, however, was short-lived, for the failure of Nivelle's grandiose offensive in April wrought his downfall. His trouble was that while he focused the end correctly he took too little account of the means. When, by the astute German retreat to the Hindenburg Line, the bases of his scheme were uprooted, he still clung to it, and, surprised himself, gave away all attempt at surprising the enemy in a scheme which could only succeed by surprise. Only one of Pétain's armies was concerned in this offensive. At the preliminary council of war his opinion had been against the unlimited objectives prescribed, and immediately after the initial check he urged that the offensive should be broken off. The Government, disillusioned by the heavy losses and slight gains, lacked the courage either to stop Nivelle or to back him, and their petty interference merely sapped the confidence of all ranks. Ultimately, on April 28, they appointed Pétain Chief of the French General Staff—as a brake on the offensive and as a step from which he could mount into Nivelle's seat. By May 15 the Ministers plucked up sufficient courage to depose Nivelle, and Pétain reigned in his place. This time it was a moral Verdun which he was called upon to save. Indeed he was the type of man whose services a democracy would only call on in a dark hour. So long as the sun shines, and even when shadows draw in, the people like men who will pander to their illusions and promise them more sunny hours.

Pétain's first mission was to restore the French Army, its strength and its morale. Mutinies had broken out, and if actual anarchy was the exception, refusal to obey orders was widespread. To some extent it was due to defeatist and Communist propaganda, but in far greater measure to service grievances and war weariness. The leaders might still be full of the 'offensive à outrance' or the doctrine of attrition, but the troops were sick of being thrown against barbed wire and machine-guns to no apparent effect, and they could see no difference between Joffre's 'nibbling' and Nivelle's 'break-through' strategy, except that in one the losses were spread out and in the other concentrated. Sixteen army corps were affected, and the trouble generally arose with troops ordered back to the trenches from rest.

Faced with a crumbling army, Pétain adopted the same policy as Scipio, another supreme psychologist, had practised at Suero two thousand years before—a fearless and firm call to duty combined with prompt remedy of just grievances. Had he read his Polybius? For a month his car travelled up and down the front visiting nearly every division. He summoned not merely officers, but men from the ranks, before him, and asked them frankly for their complaints, while strongly rebuking the crime of mutiny in face of the enemy. Essentially patriarchal and not familiar, he inspired confidence in his firm control as well as in his promises. Tours of duty in the trenches were made equal, regularity of leave ensured, rest camps improved. Within a month tranquillity was restored—with hardly a dozen executions. But if the Army was convalescent, he had still to revive its fighting confidence and power. To this end he reorganised the training, prescribed the new method of the defence in depth, and recast the offensive tactics in such a manner that fire-power should so far as possible replace men in the attack. Finally, he tempered his weapon afresh by a few strictly limited attacks, which by cheaply won success should consolidate the re-born confidence of the troops. Such were Guillaumat's attack at Verdun in August, which regained the whole of the ground lost in 1916, and Maistre's attack at Malmaison in October, which captured the whole of the famous Chemin des Dames ridge.

'Going slow' was the only possible policy, but it meant that the French Army was practically out of action for the remainder of 1917, and meanwhile the British had to bear the whole burden. Perhaps they shouldered it too generously, and unwisely, thus

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leaving themselves so weakened that they were a ready prey to the dangers of 1918.

But if Pétain, in his concern for the restoration of the French Army, left much to his Allies, it is just to record that when the British achieved their great tank surprise at Cambrai in November, Pétain had assembled strong French reinforcements in the Senlis-Peronne area and set them in motion directly the attack was launched. It remains one of the mysteries of the war why their support was not called upon, the more so that the splendid opportunity offered by this new tank method was lost through lack of British reserves.

On the heels of the battle followed the bitter controversy over the Versailles Council and the question of unity of command. Pétain, unlike most of the French and British commanders, was not a Western Front fanatic, and had been an advocate of wider operations against the strategic flank of the Germanic Alliance—he was too much of a realist to shut his eyes to the futility of attrition or a break-through until a new key was found. Hence his opposition to the Supreme War Council did not spring from a hide-bound 'Westernism.' But, like his opposite number, Haig, he distrusted committee control, and preferred to make a direct arrangement with Haig for mutual support in face of the looming menace of a German offensive. Nevertheless he was to be the indirect cause of the breakdown of this arrangement.

Pétain was thoroughly convinced of the danger, and stood firm against all pressure and clamour to harry him into either a premature or a preventive offensive. In the light of after-knowledge we can realise that such a move would not only have been ineffectual but have bankrupted the Allied cause, for their margin of reserves barely held out in the pure defensive next spring. As a further safeguard he wished to adopt the system of elastic defence which was to be so effective in July 1918, but the Government attached an exaggerated moral value to the ground, and thus condemned themselves to lose by miles what they might only have relinquished by yards—'pour mieux sauter.' Pétain was immovable before political pressure where it impinged on his dominant sense of caution, but he yielded to its influence on matters that seemed to him less menacing to the security of France. Herein lay the cause of the breakdown of the scheme for co-operation between the Allied armies.

The initial source was that while the British Intelligence

rightly, predicted the German offensive on the St. Quentin front, the French, wrongly, anticipated it in Champagne. When the blow fell on March 21 they believed that it was only a feint preceding the real blow on their own front, and in consequence the promised support was somewhat slow to arrive, although its numerical strength was certainly in excess of the limited pledge originally given. Moreover, when the German flood surged forward so rapidly that it seemed Amiens must fall, he informed Haig on March 24 that the reserves then concentrating near Montdidier would have to be withdrawn south-westwards in order to cover the approach to Paris. This would have meant the separation of the Allied armies. It was averted by the Doullens Conference and the appointment of Foch to co-ordinate the action of the whole front, a measure whose immediate purpose was to prevent this cleavage.

But if Pétain failed to take long views in this crisis, he was large-hearted enough to respond loyally to the orders of Foch, the man whom a year before he had rescued from semi-retirement. And if thenceforth he played a subordinate rôle in the strategy of the campaign, he was fertile in tactical expedients, showing all his old quickness to recognise the possibilities of new weapons. Thus on the evening of March 23, while at dinner, he interrupted the meal to issue a sudden order for the available air squadrons to be despatched for a surprise counter-attack, like cavalry of the air, on the German divisions coming up to carry on the advance.

Pétain's own turn to bear the brunt of battle came in May, when the German torrent broke by surprise through the Aisne front and swept to the banks of the Marne in four days. The surprise was primarily due to the defects of the French Intelligence service and to the blindness and overbearing obstinacy of General Duchêne, the Sixth Army commander, who refused to listen to the warnings both from his own subordinates and the commanders of the British divisions which had been sent to this 'quiet sector' to rest. Pétain must bear some of the responsibility for retaining a commander who had long been a source of friction and distrust, but he acted promptly and wisely in stemming the westward expansion of the flood. And he divined and was ready for the German attempt, which followed on June 9, to break down the buttress left between the bulges they had made in March and May respectively. To meet this attack he experimented with his plan of elastic defence, yielding the first position to the enemy, and then, when their advance had lost its momentum and order, offering a thoroughly prepared

resistance on the second position. Owing to the innate conservatism of the commanders on the spot, obsessed with the tradition of holding on to every yard of ground, the experiment was only a partial success—for which the local command was castigated by Pétain. But it paved the way for July 15, when the final German onslaught, east of Rheims, was completely dislocated by this method, surprising the would-be surprisers. As at Verdun so at Rheims—by the irony of fortune popular opinion called this 'Gouraud's manœuvre,' although Pétain had taken a week to persuade this lion-hearted leader to fall in with his plan of yielding up the forward position. If Pétain countermanded the historic counterstroke, which Foch ordered to continue, it is unjust to suggest that he intended more than a temporary postponement, for whereas Foch had wished to anticipate the enemy's offensive by his own, Pétain's conception had been that of the defensive-offensive battle as it was actually waged—first to parry the enemy's thrust and then a riposte when he was off his balance.

He had gauged the situation aright after checking the previous German attack, when, forsaking his habitual caution, he had prophesied: 'If we can hold on until the end of June, our situation will be excellent. In July we can resume the offensive; after that, victory will be ours.' With more insight into material factors than Foch—whose mind had been filled with dreams of this offensive while the German blows were still falling—Pétain had realised that the scales turned on the flow of American reinforcements, and that the essential factor was to keep his forces unbroken until the Americans tilted the balance against Germany. July 18 and its sequel were the vindication of his judgment and atoned for any momentary short sight in March. In the actual advance to victory, skilful as was his combination of penetrative advances with successive lateral exploitations, Pétain played only a minor rôle, partly because the strategical direction was in the hands of Foch, and partly because the decisive work was done by the British and American forces. If this was natural, because they formed the two horns of the advancing masses, it must be admitted that the French in the centre fell in admirably with this manœuvre, threatening the enemy by their presence but not hurrying his retreat from the bag which the British and Americans were steadily closing. The French advance usually kept a step in rear, moving forward when their allies on the flanks had pushed back the enemy. Thus Pétain's life-saving policy not merely preserved the French Army until the tide turned, but preserved it until peace was won. On

November 21, 1918, after the triumphal entry into the redeemed city of Metz, Pétain received the Marshal's baton that he had so well earned of his country. He had proved himself one of the first, and one of the few, leaders to understand the mechanism of modern war, as it had been developed by industrial nations in arms. In such warfare the artist was at a loss, but Pétain had contributed the keen perception and supreme organising power that were essential.

Moreover, he was a profound psychologist. Where Foch knew only his own soul, Pétain penetrated into the thoughts and feelings of the men in the trenches, the people in arms. And to the sordid business which warfare had become he imparted a current of personal magnetism, otherwise rare among the higher command. His justness, his sympathy, his thoroughness were all sources of his hold on men's affections, but there were more. For example, it was a custom of his to visit a regiment, have a dozen men called out of the ranks, and ask them to name the bravest man in the regiment. When they had come to a decision Pétain there and then would pin the Legion of Honour on the breast of the officer or man they had chosen.

As a commander he has been reproached for excessive caution. It would be more true to say that he was excessively careful—of lives. While the motto of a brilliant fighting leader like Mangin was 'victory at any price,' Pétain's motto was 'victory at the smallest price.' This instinct sprang less from caution than from realism. Like a ray of light his vision pierced the conventional mist of pre-war military ideas in search of truth. He even carried his love of truth so far that, unlike his predecessors, he set his face against ambiguous reports which covered up ill-success, and against any propaganda by his staff. Self-discipline and self-effacement replaced flattery and intrigue.

For want of opportunity history may not rate him among the great strategists. And it would seem that he was more an inventor of tactical methods than an executive tactician. But it is almost certain that the French Army would never have recovered if Pétain had not been called to command in 1917. He made victory possible. If Foch, for all his great qualities, or any other offensive-inspired general had been appointed instead, the war would have been lost—for France at least.

Thus the verdict of history on Pétain is likely to read 'the man who, like Fabius, saved his country by avoiding battle, and who, like Carnot, was the organiser of victory.'

LITERARY ACROSTICS.

THE fourteenth series of Literary Acrostics begins with No. 53 printed below, and will run for four months. Prizes to the value of at least £3 will be awarded to the most successful solvers. There will also be consolation prizes, two or more in number : the winners of these will be entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. And, further, every month a similar prize of books will be awarded to the sender of the correct solution that is first opened.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 53.

(The First of the Series.)

- ' Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And ——— faith than ——— blood.'
1. ' And the ——— of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls lightly on deep Galilee.'
 2. ' Who steals my purse steals trash ; 'tis something, nothing ;
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands.'
 3. ' He holds him with his glittering eye—
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child :
The ——— hath his will.'
 4. ' Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife,
To all the sensual world ———,
One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name.'
 5. ' The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the ———.'
 6. ' Seeking the bubble reputation
——— in the cannon's mouth.'

RULES.

1. Only one answer may be sent to each light.
2. Every correct light and upright will score one point.
3. With his answer every solver must send the coupon that is printed on page x of 'Book Notes' in the preliminary pages of this issue.
4. At the foot of his answer every solver must write his pseudonym (consisting of one word), and nothing else. His name and address should be written at the back.
5. Solvers must on no account write either the quotations or the references on the same paper as their answers. It is not necessary, or even desirable, to send them at all.
6. Solvers who write a second letter, to correct a previous answer, must send the complete solution as they wish it, and not merely state the desired alteration.
7. Answers to Acrostic No. 53 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE, 50A Albemarle Street, London, W. 1, and must arrive not later than January 20.

ANSWER TO No. 52.

1. M	alapro	P
2. I	on	E
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PROEM: Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, iii. 1; and *The Winter's Tale*, iv. 4.

LIGHTS:

1. Sheridan, *The Rivals*, v. 3.
2. Lytton, *The Last Days of Pompeii*, book 2, ch. 4.
3. C. Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, ch. 32.
4. Longfellow, *The Saga of King Olaf*, ii.
5. Southey, *The Curse of Kehama*, xxii. 11.
6. Dickens, *The Cricket on the Hearth*, Chirp the First.
7. Thackeray, *The Virginians*, ch. 59.

Acrostic No. 51 ('Meeter Latter'): Correct answers were received from 29 solvers, partly correct from 47, and there were three that infringed the rules. The difficult quotations were the second and fourth lights, from Longfellow and R. Browning.

The monthly prize is taken by 'Omar,' who sent the first correct answer that was opened. Miss E. M. Oram, 1 Bolingbroke Grove, S.W. 11, will choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue.

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